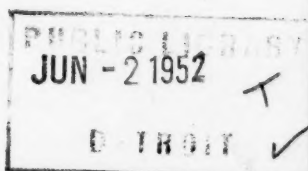


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May 1952

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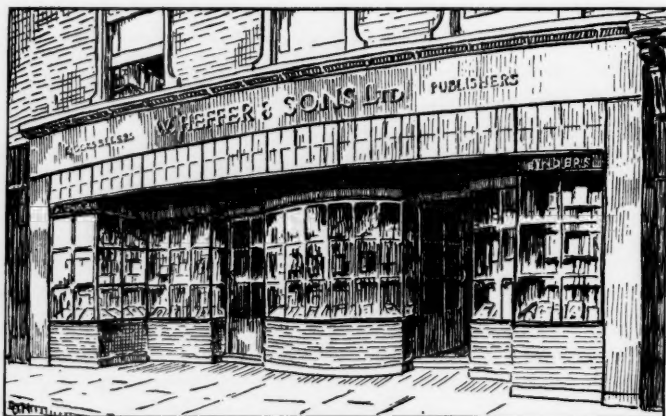
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Edited by GEOFFREY SHARP

VOL. XIII, NO. 2

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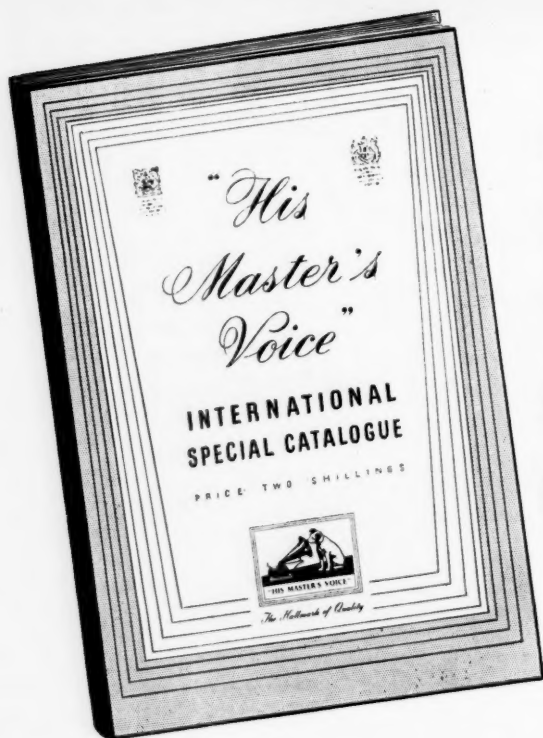
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*The Sense of History in Musical Interpretation**

BY

HANS NATHAN

Les musiciens ne font que
commencer à connaître la
jouissance du sens historique.

Wanda Landowska (1909).

THIS paper will concern itself with the interpretation of music whose style of performance is either forgotten or not yet clarified. It will thus deal with music composed before *cir.* 1750 and after 1910—in popular terminology, with early and modern music.

In connection with early music, we are apt to think at once of such problems as ornamentation, the instrumentation of mediaeval and Renaissance music, the styles of *basso continuo* realization, obsolete instruments and their playing technique, and so forth. Unquestionably these problems are of paramount importance. Since many of them remain unanswered, much intensified research is still needed before its results can be made easily available, as they should, to contemporary musicians in a comprehensive manual or encyclopaedia.

Instead of dealing with aspects of this kind, we shall confine ourselves to questions over and above them. That they exist is evident, for it cannot be maintained that the use of a carefully edited seventeenth-century score and of early instruments, for example, will alone insure a high stylistic fidelity of performance. What they provide is of course a necessary basis, but only a preliminary to interpretation.

To begin with, two premises must be discussed, one concerning the essence of musical interpretation, the other the essence of a musical composition.

The style of performance from about the time of Beethoven to Richard Strauss is well known to musicians in our era. In contrast to Machaut, Dufay, Ockeghem and Josquin, a Beethoven, a Mendelssohn, a Schubert and a Brahms do not present insoluble problems to us. This assumption seems justified when we consider that we know as much about these styles as we can possibly hope to know about those of any period of the dim past or the too lively present.¹ As a matter of fact, nineteenth-century styles (and Mozart's) are so well established that they constitute *norms* by which any performer guides himself, be it consciously or unconsciously. There is such a thing as a Beethoven style of performance or a Beethoven image, a Mendelssohn image, a Schubert image and a Brahms image to which any musician will conform so

* This essay is a revised version of a paper read at the annual convention of the College Music Association in Washington, D.C., December, 1950.

¹ A legitimate interpretation of these styles is not *always* attained, but it is often, and it is always attainable without serious difficulties.

closely that the interpretation of these masters amounts to the developing of the *variant of a norm*. It is because norms do not exist for early and modern music that interpretation often yields such nondescript results.

Now we must raise the question: is there such a thing as a right or wrong performance of a work? The answer depends on how much substantiality we grant a musical score. There is a wide-spread belief that art (especially music) is a mere transcript of emotional states—a substitute, perhaps refined or condensed, for feelings and moods.

It is true that composers at times endeavour to reproduce emotional states, often as an adjunct to certain social occasions; or that they simply reflect a given attitude towards life. In every case, however, they achieve considerably more than a symbolization of emotional qualities, because the elaboration of their material itself, the extension of tones and chords into a composition forces them to: they in substance create an artifact which in many of its elements is not congruent with anything in real life. These elements have a way of asserting themselves and of impressing on us their own configuration.

It can be shown that the practical application of the theory of a musical composition as a transcript of emotions leads ultimately to a negation of the singularity of the work of art itself.

A listener waiting for what he expects to be a psychological drama will respond mainly to those of its elements which, borrowed from or related to life, have indeed a direct emotional appeal, such as volume (with its gradual and sudden changes), overall sonority (created by harmony and *timbre*), and pace. Missing such "non-realistic" elements of the composition as melody, thematic elaboration, the articulate progression of chords, and form, he will allow his imagination much leeway in listening and supply to the score personal associations which are not necessarily there. Unable to differentiate between what the music actually is and what it means to him in his own personal biography, he reduces it to a highly effervescent and changeable phenomenon—to something that is one thing to-day and another tomorrow.²

Such an approach ought to be unacceptable to trained musicians and particularly to those who by profession are engaged in performing compositions or analyzing them. For by studying a work, coming to conclusions about it, lending it one definite sonority in preference to others, they demonstrate its reality, that is, the uniqueness of its existence which is binding on every beholder as a natural phenomenon is on a scientist. The reality of a composition is thus acknowledged *implicitly*. To have it acknowledged *explicitly*, we will have recourse to a few thinkers who, though divergent in their principles and perspectives, yet concur on the one point which concerns us.

René Wellek says:³

"the act of cognition [of an object is] not an act of arbitrary invention of subjective distinctions, but the recognition of some norms imposed on us by reality. Similarly

² This situation has been aptly described by T. S. Eliot in his well-known essay "The Perfect Critic". What he says there of poetry and its readers is of course also applicable to music.

³ "The Mode of Existence of a Literary Work of Art" in *Critiques and Essays in Criticism* 1920-1948, selected by Robert Wooster Stallman, New York, 1949.

the structure of a work of art has the character of a 'duty which I have to realize'. I shall always realize it imperfectly, but in spite of some incompleteness, a certain 'structure of determination' remains, just as in any other object of knowledge".

In discussing the meaning of an artistic detail within its context, I. A. Richards comes to the same conclusion, although he approaches the problem from an entirely different angle:⁴

"A single word by itself . . . will raise almost as many different thoughts and feelings as there are persons who hear it. . . . But put it into a sentence and the variation is narrowed; put it into the context of a whole passage, and it is still further fixed; and let it occur in such an intricate whole as a poem and the responses of competent readers may have a similarity which only its occurrence in such a whole can secure."

And finally a few sentences in a similar vein by the psychologist Carroll C. Pratt. In his book *The Meaning of Music*⁵ he writes:

"To the extent . . . to which form plays a rôle in the aesthetic experience it can be demonstrated that that portion of the experience (plus all the sensuous content) depends largely upon what the artist has done with his materials rather than upon the imaginative and associative supplementation of the person who beholds his work. The value of the experience has its permanent residence in the work of art itself, and, although the experiential correlate of this work is subject to no little variation, its stability and likelihood of recurrence are far, far greater than can possibly be the case with those experiences richly filled out with associated and extraneous meanings and imaginings."

Wellek's expression "the structure of a work of art" and Pratt's references to "form" and "what the artist has done with his materials" imply that the work of art represents a definite structural entity whose various elements lead a significant life of their own. This they do especially in such an abstract art as music. The very details of a composition: intervals, dissonances, consonances, texture, form, *timbre* and rhythm must be grasped before we can be sure of the validity of our artistic experience; grasping requires not only cool recognition but the talent of empathy—not merely observation but participation. Musical performance must necessarily follow the same principle. If this were not true, a conductor would have merely to verbalize the psychological qualities of Mozart's G minor Symphony to his orchestra in order to render it faithfully. We know all too well that even the most skilful characterization of this kind will evade the issue—an issue which must be clarified above all on purely musical grounds. Wellek throws the problem into sharp relief:⁶

"joy induced by a piece of music is, not joy in general or even joy of a particular shade, but is an emotion closely following and thus tied to the pattern of the music. We experience emotions which have only a general tone in common with those of real life, and even if we define these emotions as closely as we can, we are still quite removed from the specific object which induced them".

Our preliminary investigations offer us at least a measure of assurance that a musical composition is a phenomenon of tangible, recognizable properties and organization. Thus the task of the performer is clearly enough circumscribed.

⁴ *Principles of Literary Criticism*, New York, 1928, pp. 9-10.

⁵ New York, 1931, pp. 89-90.

⁶ "The Parallelism between Literature and the Arts", in *The English Institute Annual* (1941), York, 1942.

Various structural problems can undoubtedly be solved merely by the study of the specific score in which they occur, and no biographical, psychological, historical or sociological reading can substitute for this study. However it is evident that because of the insufficiency of notation many structural details appear only as faint suggestions or are not visible at all, so that other points of reference, both musical and non-musical are needed to supplement the printed page. The latitude of such an indication as *allegro* alone indicates the vagueness of notational symbols. Another example is volume: a *sforzato* in Schubert is different from one in Beethoven; and still another is the duration of notes. We will find, to use a contemporary reference, that the average eighth-note in Stravinsky is shorter than the average eighth-note in Bartók—simply because the notes are determined by their respective contexts: a brittle, meticulously precise style in the one case—a throaty, soulful style in the other. Here are qualities which could not have been arrived at merely from the study of a single score of each composer.

The problem of a faithful musical interpretation whose tradition is lost or not yet established can be attacked from two angles. We can ask: what shall we do? and, what shall we avoid? The second question seems negative, but it, too, can contribute to our ends.

Every musical period is obviously characterized by an idiom all its own. It is true that certain concepts (such as imitation, fugue, sonata-form) are carried on through centuries, but they are only traditional devices in styles which are unique as a whole. Our efforts must therefore be directed towards the interpretation of the individuality of each style. We need to question the validity of any *one* mode of performance, but we often fail to do this by assimilating styles to those with which we are most familiar. We may not know anything about mediaeval singing practice, but it goes without saying that a *trouvère* song cannot be performed in the polished, self-conscious manner of a modern song recital, or a part in a Monteverdi opera like Leoncavallo. Although traps like this are not so easily avoided, we can by-pass them if we recognize the limitations of our own historical position and of our historical concepts.

Our historical position in music is determined by our predilections and tastes—predilections formed by our training and occupational activities. Such biases as the romantic, the modern and the national, to name a few, must be understood clearly for what they are, in order to be suppressed where they are not applicable.

The romantically inclined musician will insist on a full, rich tone, on strong *vibrato*, on many *crescendi* and *decrescendi*, on an emphasis on harmony (a well blended one, rather than on separateness of lines) and on changes of *tempo* within the same composition. The consequences of this attitude are only too well known. They are observable in countless examples. How often does Bach sound like Brahms, and slow baroque movements like an *adagio* by Bruckner! How often does the breadth and comparative sensuousness of a violin part by Handel approach Tchaikovsky's rhetoric! How often are the nineteenth-century elements in contemporary music overstressed: the high

dynamic level and the flexible *tempo* in Bartók or, in such a score as Stravinsky's *Apollon Musagète*, the colour value of harmonies similar to those in traditional ballet music.

The difference between the "romantic" performer and the "modern" performer becomes evident when both sightread a score. The first is apt to play it too slowly, the second too fast. Then, speed and restlessness, though controlled, are among the tendencies of "modern" musicians; others are straight dynamics and straight *tempi*, an interest in line rather than in harmony, a scrupulous observance of note values and finally hard accentuations. These tendencies may perhaps be more widely applicable to other styles than the romantic tendencies are, but it is courting disaster to assume that they are applicable to all styles. This is an historical consideration, however, which is often disregarded. For example, a closeness of certain chord formations does not necessarily suggest dissonant effects. An insistence on melodic clarity and rhythmic precision may lead to an "X-raying" of Chopin or Brahms. If a pianist plays Scarlatti and emphasizes the lines at the expense of harmony, he may easily arrive at something like Stravinsky. While the "romantic" performer will concentrate on Bach's harmony, the "modern" will concentrate on his polyphony, with the result that in either case the all important balance of both aspects does not emerge. A "modern" violinist playing Corelli will perhaps avoid the excessive *vibrato* of the nineteenth century (even if he does not know from historical sources of its discreet use in baroque music), but his cool, wiry tone, well suited to Hindemith, may equally fail to do justice to the sensitivity and elegance of Corelli's *cantilena*. Nor is a rigid *tempo* appropriate to certain Italian madrigals of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Finally, if a preoccupation with contemporary music clouds our view of the romantic elements in Bartók, Bartók may be made to sound at times like an inept imitator of the composer of *The Rite of Spring*.

Partly overlapping with the romantic and modern bias, partly complementing them, are others such as a national bias. This tricks us into making musical styles subservient to patriotism, as it were—to the French taste which is oriented to the subtle rhythms and precious textures of a Fauré, to the German taste oriented to the heavy-handed counterpoint of a Max Reger, and to the Italian taste oriented to the *brio* of a Rossini.

As to what we called "the limitations of our historical conceptions", there are two widely held views. The one insists that the sixteenth-century style in music is identical with Palestrina's, the other that the Baroque is identical with Bach. In consequence, sixteenth-century scores are often performed too slowly and are endowed with an ethereal quality which they by no means all possess. Such performances reveal an uninformed approach to a period which made distinctions between secular and sacred music, and which is not poor in regional and individual styles. Similarly, the Bach image forces an entirely inappropriate, massive interpretation on to such composers as Corelli and Purcell. At the root of these conceptions lies the romantic "great-man theory"—the view that only genius is worthy of our attention and that the smaller men are mere pale replicas of the great. This is a dangerous, arbitrary and

wholly unreliable attitude—unreliable because of the constantly changing evaluations of composers through the ages, dangerous because of the terrible uniformity of style it engenders. In interpretation we are not concerned with value judgments. We are solely concerned with the understanding of stylistic individuality whatever its character and scope. When we think of Bach while performing Buxtehude, for example, we shall strive towards a complexity which is not there and thus attain emptiness. Similarly, by taking Handel as a model for the interpretation of Vivaldi, we shall make an undistinguished and derivative composer out of the fresh, robust personality which we have come to recognize from a study of his scores. And finally Johann Christian Bach or Johann Stamitz will sound like third-rate Mozart unless we have sympathy with the simplicity of their harmony and their middle voices.

A composer whose interpretation has suffered greatly from a misunderstanding of the period in which he belongs is Haydn. The German romanticists considered the eighteenth century as mechanical, passionless, contrived and "decorative". This view has largely disappeared in literature and painting but maintains itself to some extent in music. As a result one has stressed in Haydn what seemed to anticipate the nineteenth century, or what appeared as a certain innocuous "Rococo" charm. In other words, Haydn has been performed either à la Beethoven or à la Boccherini.⁷

We have been considering what to avoid in the interpretation of musical styles unfamiliar to us. But despite the negation, the procedure may have turned out to confirm Proust's *dictum*: "the dispelling of an error gives us an additional sense". We may now take up this side of the problem which is customarily called positive.

A musical score is ever open to misunderstanding. Our spontaneous sense perceptions are not reliable because they are always directed by historical concepts which are not necessarily appropriate to the music under consideration.⁸ The avoidance of error lies in viewing the score in the historical setting of its origination. This is exactly what we do automatically and properly with nineteenth-century music. What we have taken to be the legitimate interpretation of this period comes not alone from an aural tradition but probably even more, as stated before, from the comprehensiveness of our knowledge of practically every aspect of it as well as from constant experimentation. Needless to say an equally extensive knowledge is desirable for the performance of music of other periods.

The single musical composition, ambiguous all by itself, must be "hemmed in",—"cornered", so to speak, by kindred phenomena so that relations and

⁷ It should be noted, however, that Karl Haas and the London Baroque Ensemble are actively engaged in correcting the situation.

⁸ "Everyone not only enjoys, but also appraises and interprets a work of art within the context of his own culture. He refers it to a certain concept of history—however unreflected—and to a certain theory of style—however inarticulate; and his naïveté consists only of the fact that he does this unwittingly. The scholar differs from the layman in his consciousness of the situation . . . by learning as much as he can of the circumstances under which the objects he is studying came into being. . . . he may adapt his conception of history and his theory of style to the demands of his material." From "Meaning in the Visual Arts", by Erwin Panofsky in the *Magazine of Art*, New York, February, 1951.

contrasts, similarities and differences impress themselves on our mind. Our method then is that of comparison. Only in this way will we become aware of structural details which otherwise might have escaped us or which might have remained inarticulate, as well as of the configuration of all details and their dependence on stylistic trends of their time. A comparison might start with other works of the same composer; from there it might proceed to works of contemporaries, and finally to works of the past, always with a consideration for regional traditions.⁹

Comparison involves a practical and theoretical procedure or rather an interpenetration of the two: that is to say, experimental performances of historically related styles as well as stylistic analyses of them, sensed or even verbalized. Analysis must of course avail itself of the existing musicological literature. It would be impractical, to say the least, to disregard the vigorously growing body of articles and books, especially those covering the time from the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries. Not all of this literature contains as many detailed and relevant analyses of styles as one might wish for, nor can hints concerning actual performance be expected to be more than casual. And yet in the more penetrating studies there occur felicitous characterizations of individual works, schools, trends and forms, which reveal that their authors tacitly assume definite sonorities—sonorities perhaps unsuspected by the performer.

Such a study, both sensorial and intellectual, may enable the artist to discover for himself recorded performances that represent solutions of some interpretive aspects of early and modern music. Among these recordings there probably will be Boulanger's Monteverdi, Landowska's Scarlatti, F. Couperin and Handel, Bartók's Bartók, Stravinsky's Stravinsky, and a few others.¹⁰ Recordings of this type can serve the performer as bases of operation from which he can make sorties in various directions, historically speaking.

At this point we may briefly deviate from our main topic in order to raise the question how to realize in sound what has been recognized to exist in the score. A full answer cannot be given in an essay of this kind, but a discussion of a few fundamental problems may be carried through if only to demonstrate that the way between imagining sonorities and making them audible is not necessarily a long one.

An important aspect of a musical composition is sameness. How can it be reproduced in sound? As a pertinent phenomenon, the recurrence of motives or themes comes to mind. In order to establish, throughout a composition,

⁹ This paper then is predicated on the assumption that grasping one style involves grasping various others as well. There is nothing novel about this idea since it has been operative in the interpretation of nineteenth-century music. While it no longer calls for effort there, it decidedly does in early and modern music and will continue to do so until a body of reliable interpretive *data* has been accumulated.

¹⁰ A composer cannot always be expected to give an "authentic" rendition of his own music. Like everyone else, he has to make a special mental effort to adapt himself patiently to all details of his score—a task which may be the more difficult for him if he has outgrown its idiom. Moreover, he must possess a high degree of technical proficiency. Whether Bartók would have interpreted his orchestral compositions as successfully as his piano compositions is doubtful in view of his inexperience as a conductor.

thematic identity, the initial dynamic stresses of the motive must be preserved in whatever new melodic or harmonic context it appears. A slight change in *tempo* or in *timbre* will affect thematic identity much less than a change in stresses. On the observance of this principle depends the imitative polyphony of the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, monothematic baroque music, many classical development sections, and music that works with *ostinati* as the Stravinsky style. The exact duplication of stresses is independent of overall dynamic changes. If, for example, the first tone of a motive were twice as loud as the second, it would have to remain so in *piano*, *mezzo forte*, or *fortissimo*. We have to add that thematic identity must be supported by the preservation of all the subtle reductions of the length of the printed notes which the performing musician makes for the sake of his phrasing. That this is of the greatest importance in organ music goes without saying. The principle of preserving initial stresses must be extended to the conventional contrapuntal variants of a motive (increased or diminished note values, inversion, *etc.*) as well as to real melodic variants, as for example in a Purcell trio sonata or in Haydn. For in the latter's music, highly sectionalized as it is, continuity is often achieved by developing a new theme out of the immediately preceding one, that is, by borrowing some or all of its stresses and applying them to different intervals.

In addition to recurrence of motives, there is recurrence of entire sections. Again, sameness can be made audible only by meticulously reproducing initial stresses, this time in all voices. This is particularly vital to the formal layouts of late eighteenth-century music.

Our next problem concerns the coherence of a single melodic line in both polyphonic and homophonic music. Coherence results from the proper establishment of the various stresses contained within a melodic line. By no means do these always fit into the simple, regular pattern of a *crescendo* or *decrescendo* as they do in romantic music. By fixing the respective volume of each stress, a system of dynamic gradations can be set up, which would be unique with each composer.¹¹ This is a particularly difficult task in music whose melodic lines use very little repetition and are as sensitively "exposed" as for example in Josquin's motets and *chansons*. Once the weight of each single tone is determined, and only then, can an overall rhythm materialize—a most significant but often neglected aspect of polyphony.

We are finally concerned with the function of voices within a composition, that is, with the various grades of melodic distinction. This distinction can be reflected by means of differentiation in volume: equal volume in voices of equal importance, less volume in more subordinate voices. This particular problem happens to be not too difficult in the strict polyphony of French thirteenth-century motets and in the sacred Netherlandish music of the late fifteenth century as well as in nineteenth-century homophony. However from our study of textures we know that strict polyphony is rare and that strict homophony is still rarer. To take the latter case: it is obvious that an accompanying

¹¹ A *cantus firmus* seems to be the only type of melody that calls for even stresses throughout.

voice in Mozart must stand out more clearly than in Chopin, and that a *basso continuo*, defining the lower limit of chordally oriented baroque music and "carrying" a superstructure, as it were, should be lent extra firmness. And when we read Bessler's description of a *chanson* by Binchois,¹² we may consider a dynamic differentiation necessary between its tenor and its contratenor (Exs. 1 to 4). There are numerous cases in music where the function of a voice cannot be determined definitively and which therefore allow of several (though

Ex. 1. Mozart, piano Sonata (K.333): first movement.



Ex. 2. Chopin, *Étude*. Op. 25 : 2.



Ex. 3. Corelli, Sonata. Op. 4: 3.



Ex. 4. Binchois, *Chanson*.



¹² *Die Musik des Mittelalters und der Renaissance*, by Heinrich Bessler, Potsdam, Germany, 1931, p. 195: "The main type of the Burgundian *Chanson* is consistently represented by a solo melody with the simple accompaniment of two lower voices, a type that predominates in Gilles Binchois. . . . Here, too, a new conception of part-writing is revealed in the co-ordination of upper-voice and tenor. The tenor becomes more and more a supporting, song-like counter-voice, while the contratenor, like a filler, at times even descending into the bass region, appears as if inserted into the composition."

kindred) solutions. However, a careful structural analysis can go a long way toward apportioning a volume to each voice that, by approximation at least, reflects its function at a given moment. Such an analysis becomes especially urgent with the secular music of the late sixteenth century where in the same composition homophonic and polyphonic tendencies alternate. How much bearing a structural context can have on volume may be demonstrated in a final example. In a motet of Palestrina an imitation should be less distinctly heard than in one of Monteverdi's *continuo*-madrigals. For in the first case, imitation must not disturb the equilibrium of the polyphonic context, while in the second case, it serves, conversely, to set off one voice against the other (Exs. 5 and 6).

In our search for concepts that might direct us in the interpretation of early music, we may find forms (or rather types) particularly useful. To realize them requires imagination, but the task is facilitated by musicology which for about half a century has given much attention to defining them.

Types of the eighteenth and seventeenth centuries are known to performers, though not all equally well. A classical string quartet and *concerto grosso* hold no riddles, but the principles of the trio sonata (Ex. 3) are only beginning to be understood. And when we come to the sixteenth century, to say nothing of earlier periods, the view becomes decidedly hazier.

Types can suggest to us all those features which are only implied in the score. Beyond making us aware of formal layouts, which can easily be recognized in any case, they can elucidate manners of co-ordination of the voices and the function of the single voice—those aspects which lie often enough in the no-man's land between homophony and polyphony. We may thus hit upon the proper degree of separateness of the voices (or their cohesiveness), the *tempo*, the dynamic range of the whole work, the dynamic variations within each melodic line, perhaps the proper attack for each of its tones, the volume and *timbre* of dissonances, etc.

Let us examine a specific case. Without a knowledge of the various types of the sixteenth century, Orlando di Lasso's extensive and comprehensive work, which along with Ockeghem's and Josquin's ranks among the highest goals in interpretation, will look dull and has indeed looked so to the nineteenth century. However, once such types as motet, madrigal, *chanson*, *villanella*, *lied* as well as their development and their interrelations are fixed in our mind, differentiations in style will become immediately apparent. A naive performer who studies Lasso's last and perhaps most ambitious composition, the *Lagrima di S. Pietro* of 1594, is likely to guide himself merely by the religious subject of the text and the complexity of the polyphonic texture (Ex. 7). The result may very well be the austere ceremonial style of liturgical music. However, the Italian text, usually reserved for secular types of music, and above all the harmonic and melodic idiom should have given the work away as a *madrigale spirituale*.¹³ Now the style of the Italian madrigal, precious as it often is,

¹³ A *madrigale spirituale* of very large dimensions, since it includes twenty separate movements and, in contrast to them, a final one in motet style with Latin text.

Ex. 5. Palestrina, Motet.

Cantus
Fun - da-men-ta e - jus

Altus
Fun - da-men-ta e - jus in mon - ti -

Tenor
Fun - da-men-ta e - jus in mon - ti - bus san - ctis,

Bassus
in mon - ti - bus san - ctis, etc.
-bus san - ctis, etc.
in mon - ti - bus san - ctis, fun - (-damenta) etc.
Fun - (-damenta)

Ex. 6. Monteverdi, Madrigal, *Vorrei baciarti.*

Alto
(ri-) so tu m'apri il ri - so na - sce il

Alto
Na - sce il pian - to da lor tu m'apri il ri - so tu m'apri il ri - so

Basso Continuo
pian - to da lor tu m'apri il ri - so na - sce il pian - to da

Basso
na - sce il pian - to da lor tu m'apri il ri - so

Alto
lor tu m'apri il ri - so

Basso Continuo
tu m'apri il ri - so tu m'apri il ri - so

Basso
so so

has been developed on texts expressing languidness and erotic introspection. The type calls for flexibility in *tempo* and dynamics, mellowness in *timbre*, and a regard for the variegated and refined mixture of vocal registers. A performance in this manner will bring out touches of sensual reverie in the music, unattainable through conventional concepts of religious music, and thus reveal how Lasso fused sacred with highly personal elements, faith with sentiment—a process of secularization which is characteristically pre-baroque.

Ex. 7. Lasso, *Lagime di S. Pietro*: second movement.

Canto Primo
Ma gli ar-chi, che nel pet - to gli a-ven - ta - ro

Canto Secondo
Ma gli ar-chi, che nel pet - to gli a-ven - ta - ro

Alto Primo
Ma gli ar-chi, che nel pet - to gli a-ven - ta - ro

Alto Secondo
Ma gli ar-chi, ma gli ar-chi, le sa -

Tenor Primo
Ma gli ar - chi, ma gli ar - chi, le sa -

Tenor Secondo
Ma gli ar-chi, ma gli ar-chi, le sa -

Basso
Ma gli ar-chi, ma gli ar-chi, le sa -

fur gli oc - chi (del signor)

fur gli oc - chi (del signor)

fur gli oc - chi (del signor)

fur gli oc - chi (del signor)

-et - te più a-cu - te e più mor-ta - le, fur gli oc - chi (del signor)

-et - te più a-cu - te e più mor-ta - le, fur gli oc - chi (del signor)

-et - te più a-cu - te e più mor-ta - le, fur gli oc - chi (del signor)

-et - te più a-cu - te e più mor-ta - le fur gli oc - chi (del signor)

The interpretation of a work is often guided by later styles, but nothing is more misleading. It would be far better and actually advantageous to do just the opposite, that is, to ignore future developments, developments unknowable to the composer, and to remember the style of the past from which he carved his own. For a performance of Josquin it is useful to be acquainted with Ockeghem's extended, seemingly meandering melodic lines whose coherence can be established by means of carefully organized stresses within a small dynamic range. For a performance of the string music from Gibbons to Purcell one should have absorbed the rhythmic flexibility and intimacy of the vocal music of the Elizabethan period—of those "airs and madrigalls, that whisper softnes in chambers". In performing Haydn one had better forget the luxurious and psychologically suggestive *timbres* of the nineteenth century and think instead of the lucid textures and incisive accentuations of a Scarlatti and Rameau. And even with such restless pioneers as Monteverdi, Stravinsky, Bartók and Schönberg, a knowledge of their sources can elucidate aspects of their early works in the "stile moderno" and thus reveal the beginning of a new line of stylistic continuity.

Musical interpretation, to revert to a previous statement, is determined not alone by the structural consistency of the score and additional musical associations but by non-musical associations as well. In order to realize what effects non-musical associations can have on performance, we have merely to think of the textual implications of titles in Bach's organ preludes, the dramatic overtones of an operatic *aria* by Mozart, and captions in romantic music and in Satie. They can modify *tempo*, *timbre*, dynamics and even the duration of the notes.

We are here concerned with the complex associations which stem from the cultural context in which music is created. They are present in any valid interpretation. Maggie Teyte's sure grasp of Fauré and Debussy no doubt emerges from her saturation in French culture; Bruno Walter's Mahler is surely formed from within by his intimate contact with the Austrian *milieu* in the early part of our century; and Toscanini's Verdi is the result of a career steeped in the life of nineteenth-century Italy.

While cultural associations can be acquired at first hand, they of course can be only laboriously reconstructed for early music. Even the interpretation of the music of our own time, in which we are confusingly engrossed, calls for a keen and articulate contemporaneity, and only a study of the various aspects of our intellectual life can produce it.

Cultural context involves the atmosphere of the civic occasion for which all early music was written and the artistic and philosophical pattern of which a work of art is a part. While the former is irretrievably lost, the latter is knowable in its large contours. Now in order that a knowledge of it benefit the performer, interrelations between the arts must be articulated so that qualities in a musical score which are only dimly suggested by the notes can be confirmed by other artistic phenomena. Various such parallels have been established, but there are many whose validity remains controversial. How useful it would be to see proved, in verifiable detail, sensed relations between Binchois and the

tastes and fashions of Burgundian court society, or between Giovanni Gabrieli and Venetian painting of his time! And how revealing would be a knowledge of such interrelations in the case of Stravinsky, a composer who has reacted to a variety of artistic and literary trends. There is a real need for a study that would demonstrate the French type of classicism which graces *Apollon Musagète* and *Perséphone*, or the legitimacy of Stravinsky's quotations, against the background of quotations in modern literature and painting, and thus the relevance of structural *context* in his scores.

The problem of artistic interrelation is simpler in situations where several arts are combined in one medium. Dance steps and gestures clarify the music to which they belong, original stage designs and the original style of acting (both of which should always be preserved) comment on the operatic score of which they are a part. Finally, in vocal compositions where words and tones are closely allied, the study of one aspect of the work is equally the study of the other.

Every advance in the scholarship of cultural history brings us a step closer to a time when a performer will be able fully to exploit its results. Meanwhile, unless he wishes to rely on his own insight, he may resort to a limited application of his historical awareness.

To be exact: if we study the arts of a given period, we will find overall characteristics in each which can be described in some such general terms as clarity, repose, splendour, vigour, charm, elegance, introspection, *etc.* These terms are painfully but necessarily vague because they refer to structural situations which are not only complex but, in their totality, never completely unambiguous. Taken by themselves, these terms are quite useless, but they can serve musical interpretation in a preventive or restrictive sense. Properly qualified, they can reveal to us which overall characteristics existed in the arts of a given period and which did not. A knowledge of this kind could have been utilized to exclude a frenetic element from a recent fine recording of a Vivaldi *concerto grosso* simply because the early eighteenth century did not permit it.

In order to achieve a high stylistic fidelity in early and modern music, we need a great deal of experimentation. To judge by the astonishing number of recent recordings, particularly renderings of early music—so large indeed that we are apt to forget the boldness of Professor Curt Sachs' 2000 *Jahre Alter Musik Auf Schallplatten* of 1930 and of his *Anthologie Sonore* (started in 1934)—the period of experimentation seems to be at hand. Many of its results are, however, historically and thus stylistically uninformed. But as soon as they improve they will make it possible for us to contrast, compare, and criticize varying private solutions which are subject to private fallacies. Once this happens, there is every reason to believe that norms will establish themselves.

Norms are of course no easy *formulae*. They are only valid if refined by a close study of the total output of a composer, of the influences that went into it, and of its stylistic periods.

In spite of the many straws in the wind which we have tried to gather, one aspect of early music will hardly ever be sufficiently solved: that of *timbre*

—*timbre* being largely dependent on means and manners of tone production. Even if various early instruments come again into general use, it will never be possible fully to recapture original playing and singing techniques. Be this as it may, our position will be no worse than that of an art connoisseur who has nothing but black and white reproductions of paintings. The colours of the originals are lost to him but their so-called values and their basic structural details remain. This is something most substantial—substantial enough to become the source of genuine artistic experience.

It seems therefore that resignation with regard to stylistic fidelity in the performance of early music is not warranted, perhaps even less so after we have realized what working with stylistic norms actually means.

Let us consider three valid performances of a Beethoven Sonata, two presented, in succession, by one pianist, the third by another. We are justified in believing we hear the same interpretation each time, although, scientifically speaking, dozens of fine modifications in *tempo*, dynamics and *timbre* have altered what seem to be replicas. From this we can learn that a certain latitude in the execution of structural details is not only unavoidable but permissible because it does not affect the configuration of the whole;¹⁴ that, in view of the inability of any one performer to grasp all the aspects of a score, interpretations are accepted as faithful (and thus, at bottom, as identical) if they let us hear a limited but large number of basic structural details. In the first case, the changes go unnoticed; in the second, they are noticeable but are disregarded. We may therefore conclude that there is no such thing as *one* faithful interpretation of a composition but only close approximations to it. This and no more is the scope of a norm. A norm in musical interpretation then is like our signature. It will hardly ever be exactly the same and yet it will always be recognizably ours.

Performers, no doubt dissatisfied with the stagnant repertoire of our concert life, are taking more and more cognizance not only of the music of the twentieth century but of the vast hitherto uncharted areas which musicological research has been opening up for us. An interest in "early" music is no longer an antiquarian curiosity about "pre-Bach": it represents a full-fledged reconquering of our cultural past—a process of maturation and sophistication from which all of us, composers in particular, have been benefiting.

The new riches have created new responsibilities: no interpretive detail can be taken for granted and each musical idiom must be understood on its own terms. If we agree then that musical norms of performance are to be established and to be kept fresh once they exist, musicians must acquire a *sense of history*. Moreover, their historical awareness will have to be complemented by more refined methods of analysis on the part of musicologists. In other words, to do the job, we need both the *scholarly artist* and the *artistic scholar*.

¹⁴ This is confirmed by Wanda Landowska's observation: "There are a thousand different ways of rendering the same composition without ever departing from its character." (*Musique Ancienne*, Paris, 1909, p. 140; translated as *Music of the Past*, New York, 1924, p. 100.)

That sensitivity is not in the least blunted by knowledge is shown by the composer-scholar Bartók and the poet-scholar T. S. Eliot. Nor is factual knowledge blurred by sensitivity—a view supported by so rational an art historian as Erwin Panofsky: “not only does the re-creative synthesis serve as a basis for the archaeological investigation,” he writes, “the archaeological investigation in turn serves as a basis for the re-creative process; both mutually qualify and rectify one another”.¹⁵

¹⁵ From “The History of Art as a Humanistic Discipline” in *The Meaning of the Humanities*, edited by Theodore Meyer Greene, Princeton, 1938.

The Loudness of Musical Tones

BY

LL. S. LLOYD

I

THE terms decibel and phon are apt to deter the musician who is not also a scientist from making any acquaintance with what modern scientific research has to tell us about loudness. That is a pity, for to gain some understanding of loudness is perhaps the easiest first step to learning that the tones we hear are not to be identified with the vibrations we listen to. Loudness is not a property of sound vibrations that travel through the air to our ear-drums. It is part of the response of our hearing faculty, one feature of the reactions of our ears and brains to those vibrations. To paraphrase Helmholtz,¹ we may say that the nature of that perceptual effect depends primarily on these sense organs of ours; the vibrations which cause it are, in one sense, quite secondary considerations.

Modern scientific advances have given a new orientation to our ideas about sound and hearing, and therefore to our attitude towards musical acoustics. For that reason I ventured to offer in *Decibels and Phons* a musical analogy which, I hope, presented the phon to musical readers in more familiar guise. The phon is not really a mystery at all. It is only a loudness-interval comparable, within limits, to a musical interval in a melody. It is an interval which separates two different levels of loudness, just as the musical interval separates two different levels of pitch. I shall not develop the analogy here, for in part II of *Decibels and Phons* the analogy was used to solve simple problems and so make musicians acquainted with the phon as something practical. But it was there applied to noise as well as to musical tones.

The present article is particularly concerned with the musical aspects of the results of the masterly researches of Fletcher and Munson² which have provided sure ground as the basis of our knowledge of loudness. We shall learn that the loudness of a note sounded alone depends partly on its intensity, partly on its frequency, and partly on its overtone structure.³ And while frequency (rate of vibration) is far and away the most important factor in our perception of pitch, intensity (the energy of vibration) makes a less masterful contribution to our perception of loudness.

To explain the observations of Fletcher and Munson in the simplest way possible we must draw a diagram. They recorded the loudness observed for various intensities over a wide range of frequencies. The musician would

¹ "It may be said that the nature of a sensation depends primarily on the peculiar characteristics of the (receptor) nervous mechanism; the characteristics of the perceived object being only a secondary consideration." Hermann von Helmholtz, *Physiological Optics*, in a passage descriptive of our sensations generally.

² *J. Acoust. Soc. Amer.*, 1933, 5, 82.

³ H. Fletcher, *J. Acoust. Soc. Amer.*, 1934, 6, 59; also *THE MUSIC REVIEW*, May, 1942, 3, 102.

naturally set out those frequencies, in any diagram, by a picture of a musical scale (or, more accurately, of a *tuning*) in which he would make all octaves the same size, and draw all other intervals (as tunings of two notes sounded together) in due proportion. If he had a point on his scale which represented a frequency of 100 cycles per second he would obtain its octave by multiplying 100 by 2. He would obtain its major third by multiplying 100 by $5/4$; and so on.

This is exactly how, by a mathematical process of thought which is just as natural to the physicist as the conception of musical intervals is to the musician, Fletcher and Munson represented the frequency-scale (as a physical tuning) on which to plot their experimental observations. This frequency-scale is the graduated horizontal line at the bottom of Fig. 1, which is here reproduced by kind permission of Dr. Fletcher.

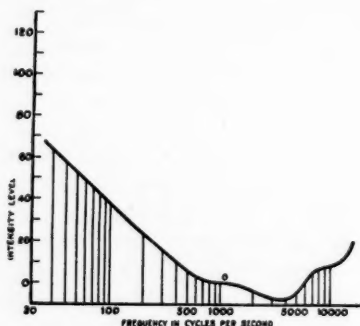


Figure 1

The first thing the reader will observe about this horizontal line is that, as we go along it from left to right, from lower to higher frequencies, the graduations are constantly crowding together. Three times it is necessary to begin again and make a larger difference of vibrations in our graduations, once at 100, once at 1,000, and once at 10,000. But it is easy to observe that the musical intervals are shown in correct proportions. The zero is a frequency of 20. The third graduation on its right is a frequency of 50. The interval from 50 to 100 is just the same as that from 100 to 200 for both are octaves. Similarly the interval from 100 to 1,000 (which is 3 octaves and a major third) is the same as that from 1,000 to 10,000.

The vertical lines drawn on the diagram record, by means of their lengths, the intensity, or energy, of the vibrations used in the observations made by Fletcher and Munson. For mathematical reasons complementary to those which determine the graduations of his frequency-scale, the physicist records increases of energy by an energy-interval representing a *constant rate of increase of energy*. The physicist finds it convenient to choose, as giving his unit of increase, an addition to the existing energy of just over 25 per cent. or $\frac{1}{4}$. Thus one unit of increase in any existing intensity gives us an intensity $1\frac{1}{4}$

times as great.⁴ The energy is increased in approximately the ratio 5 : 4. This scale of energy-increase is shown by the graduations on the vertical axis. We shall best understand this scale if we remember that the numbering on the horizontal axis would have been uniform, like that on the vertical axis, if it had been graduated in major thirds instead of in frequencies. Contrariwise, the graduations on the vertical axis would have crowded together as we ascend it had they represented direct measurements of the amount of energy instead of energy-intervals. The reader who grasps the essential similarity between a sequence of energy-intervals and a sequence of major thirds, has gone a long way to obtaining a working acquaintance with decibels. For the unit the physicist uses to record increases of intensity he calls a decibel. (He can measure the *amount* of the energy, directly, by his instruments, as we measure length in inches.) If we think of a decibel as an energy-interval, comparable to a frequency-interval which we hear as a major third (for the ratio of a major third is 5 : 4), this alarming term becomes quite comprehensible.

For example, when we add two musical intervals we multiply their vibration-ratios to find the ratio of the combined interval. Thus, if we add a perfect fourth (ratio $4/3$) to a perfect fifth (ratio $3/2$) we produce an interval with the ratio $\frac{4}{3} \times \frac{3}{2}$ which equals $\frac{4}{2}$, the ratio of an octave. The frequency is doubled. Similarly to add a two-decibels increase to some existing energy we multiply their ratios ($5/4$) together, and our energy is increased in the ratio $25/16$ (which is the vibration-ratio of the augmented fifth $CG\sharp$, the sum of two major thirds).

On a level with the tops of the various vertical lines in Fig. 1 we can find on the vertical axis on the left, or estimate, the graduations which give their respective lengths. These lengths record, in decibels, the different intensity-levels required, at each of a number of frequencies, by a simple pendular vibration⁵ in the air if it is to become just audible to the most sensitive ears. Through the tops of all these vertical lines a curved line has been drawn. This line is the graph of a loudness-level, the loudness being that of just audible sound. It is a picture of what the scientist calls the threshold of hearing. It records the different intensity-levels which are needed to enable pure tones of different pitches to cross the threshold and enter our consciousness. If a vibration has insufficient energy to enable it to cross the threshold our faculty of hearing is unable to detect its existence. So as we are dealing with the zero loudness-level we label this graph 0 phons.

Now compare the intensity-levels which vibrations with frequencies of 1,000 and 100, respectively, must have if they are to cross the threshold. These intensity-levels, recorded in decibels, are given by the lengths of the vertical lines raised at the graduations for 1,000 and 100, respectively. The top of the vertical line raised at 1,000 is on a level with the graduation mark 0

⁴ To be exact, the physicist takes $1.2589 \dots$ not $1\frac{1}{4}$ (1.25) as his unit of increase; so 1.26 is a closer approximation to his unit of increase than $1\frac{1}{4}$. For those who remember their logarithms, the explanation is that $\log 1.2589 \dots$ is $0.10000 \dots$.

⁵ A simple pendular vibration (i.e. a vibration resembling short swings of a pendulum) is the only kind of vibration which our hearing faculty converts, in our heads, into a pure tone free from overtones (see *The Musical Ear*, Oxford University Press, p. 13).

on the vertical axis. This does not mean that the vibration has no intensity. A small intensity is taken as zero, just as 20 cycles per second is taken as the zero of the musical intervals to be found on the frequency-scale. By contrast, the top of the vertical line raised at 100 gives us a point on our graph which is almost on a level with the graduation mark 40 on the vertical axis. Let us find out what this means.

At the new international pitch, by which A in the treble stave is based on a frequency of 440 cycles per second, a frequency of 1,000 is approximately that of B \sharp resting on the first leger line above the treble stave. A frequency of 100 will be that of a note three octaves and a major third below it.⁶ This is approximately G on the bottom line of the bass stave.⁷

40 decibels mark a greater increase of intensity than we might suppose. This increase is *not* just 40 times the increase of one decibel. To add decibels we multiply their ratios as we have seen. Thus, to add 10 decibels together, we may write down the fraction $5/4$ ten times and multiply all these fractions together (nine multiplications). The answer will be nearly 10. The reader who tackles this sum can make his answer more accurate by using 1.26 instead of $5/4$; but even then, before he gets far, he will understand why the mathematician prefers to do it, quickly and still more accurately, by his labour-saving device of logarithms, when the more places of decimals he uses in his logarithms, the less distinguishable from 10 his answer becomes. Similarly, 20 decibels increase the intensity 100 times (*i.e.* *not* 10 + 10 times but 10×10 times).

10 decibels make a bel.⁸ One bel therefore increases the energy tenfold (that is the definition of a bel). Two bels increase it a hundredfold. But four bels, *i.e.* 40 decibels, increase it ten-thousandfold. It is startling to find that, if a simple pendular vibration at the bottom of the bass stave is to make its existence known to our hearing faculty, it needs nearly 10,000 times the energy of the faintest vibration just above the treble stave of which our ears are conscious.

By way of contrast, consider a more normal loudness-level: that which we label 70 phons. This is the loudness-level at which noise begins to be a nuisance. We may think of it as *f* in the sound of an orchestra. The intensity-levels required to reach this loudness-level at various frequencies are given by the lengths of the vertical lines in Fig. 2.

The curve in this figure is similar in character to that in Fig. 1 but, except at the right-hand end, it has a much less pronounced slope. To sound as loud as our high B \sharp at this loudness-level, G on the bottom line of the bass stave needs to have a greater intensity than the B \sharp , greater in fact by some 7 decibels. But an increase of even 7 decibels is not a negligible disparity. It means a fivefold increase of energy. The disparity between the intensities

⁶ We have already noted that the vibration-ratio of this long interval is 10 : 1.

⁷ More exactly, this G would correspond to 99 cycles per second.

⁸ More correctly, we begin with the bel and divide it into 10 similar increases which we call decibels. For our purposes, it is a happy coincidence that a decibel, derived from the bel as a tenfold increase, should have nearly the ratio of a major third. But it is pure coincidence.

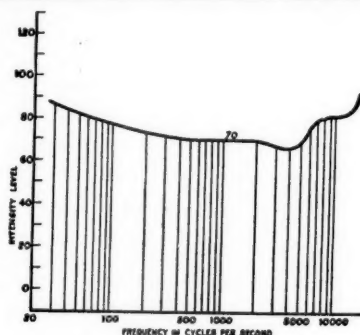


Figure 2

of our high B \sharp and our low G increases as we go to lower and lower loudness-levels. A diagram in part II of this paper will enable the reader to satisfy himself that, at a loudness-level of 50 phons, the disparity is about 17 decibels, *i.e.* a fiftyfold increase of energy.

We have found the reason why the sounds of the big organ pipes in the bottom octave of the open diapason do not overwhelm the sounds of the smaller ones in the upper octaves, although they use up far more wind, *i.e.* take far more energy from the windchest. The explanation lies in the properties of the ear.

One qualification of what we have written should be made. Individuals vary in their judgments of loudness, and some ears are more sensitive than others. We must therefore be careful to think of these loudness-levels as corresponding to the average judgments of persons of good hearing.

The reader who has patiently accompanied me so far will need no further convincing that loudness depends on the frequency as well as on the intensity of the vibration we listen to.

II

In part I of this paper we drew diagrams for two loudness-levels, which we labelled 0 phons and 70 phons, to show how loudness depends on frequency as well as on intensity. Fletcher and Munson drew similar diagrams for 11 other loudness-levels which we label 10, 20, 30, . . . 120 phons; making 13 such diagrams altogether. To facilitate comparison between different loudness-levels they superimposed all the curves on a single diagram which is reproduced, by Dr. Fletcher's kind permission, in Fig. 3.

Even to those who are familiar with mathematical curves this complicated diagram is distinctly forbidding till they have studied it carefully. I think that is because it contains so much information; but I am sure that to others, less familiar with mathematical curves, this diagram becomes more comprehensible if they begin, as we did in part I, with two of the curves separately and study them first. Fig. 3 presents many interesting features. Let us begin by examining the vertical line through the graduation for 1,000 on the frequency-scale. We at once observe that, whenever it crosses a horizontal

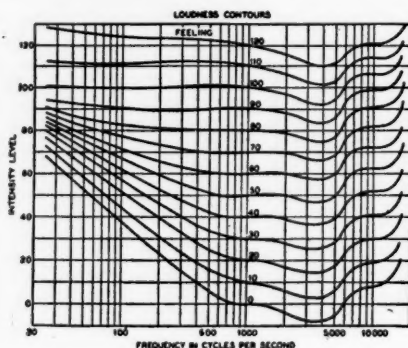


Figure 3

line that marks an intensity-level, it also crosses one of the wavy loudness-level curves. The numbering of this loudness-level, in phons, is identical with the numbering we find, from the vertical axis, for the horizontal line itself, which gives the intensity in decibels. The numbers are identical because, by its definition, the phon is tethered to the decibel at this frequency. A loudness-level denoted at any frequency by, say, 60 phons is defined as having the loudness, for average ears, that a vibration with an intensity denoted by 60 decibels has at the frequency of 1,000 cycles per second. The phon in short is the physicist's device for equating loudness, all over a particular loudness-level, with the loudness corresponding, at a frequency of 1,000 cycles per second, to an intensity which he can *measure* with his scientific apparatus. It is a unit of equivalent loudness, and is the result of careful scientific record of the average judgments of the ears of experienced observers, of good hearing, under conditions which can be accurately measured.

This definition of the phon points to the technique used by the scientist to record loudness-levels. The observer listens in turn, to the sound whose loudness-level is required, and to a standard tone produced by vibrations at the rate of 1,000 cycles per second. He adjusts the intensity of the standard tone till he judges it to be just as loud as the sound in question. He then measures the intensity of the standard tone in decibels. The answer gives him the loudness-level in phons.⁹

Another feature of the diagram will attract attention. Where the vertical line through the graduation for 1,000 cycles per second on the frequency-scale crosses any loudness-level curve below that for 90 phons, that curve runs horizontally, or practically so, for a longer or shorter distance. Until we exceed a loudness of 80 phons the longest horizontal section of this kind to be found in any of the curves of loudness-level is on that labelled 70 phons (*f*). It extends from a frequency of about 500 to one we may estimate at 1,500; *i.e.* over a musical interval of about a twelfth. Over all the rest of the nine or ten octaves covered by this loudness-level on our figure, loudness is increased

⁹ *Decibels and Phons*, Appendix, p. 18.

or diminished by a change of frequency if the intensity remains the same. Thus, if we travel to the left, along a (horizontal) intensity-level, say that of 50 decibels, we see that, owing to their slope, we keep crossing curves for lower and lower loudness-levels, which means that the sound will continually become fainter. But if we travel to the right instead, we soon reach a region where the curves bend down, and then the sound will continually become louder till we reach the region where they stop bending down. At loudness levels below that labelled 70 phons, the intervals over which the horizontal sections extend become smaller. For the loudness-level of 40 phons (*pp*) for instance, the interval covers little more than an octave. Whenever the loudness-level curves slope, the phon and the decibel part company. They remain partners only so long as the loudness-level curve runs horizontally: only then do loudness and intensity go hand in hand.

We have now reached the point of our story at which overtones make their appearance. Measuring upwards from its fundamental tone the overtones of a musical note occur (whether our unaided ear can detect them or not) at an octave, a twelfth, a fifteenth, a seventeenth, and so on. Take the open G string of the violin. Its note is G at the top of the bass stave, which represents a frequency of 200 cycles per second. On the horizontal axis at the bottom of Fig. 3 this is the graduation next on the right of 100. We see from Fig. 3 that a simple pendular vibration, *i.e.* one that we hear as a tone free from overtones, which has a frequency of 200 cycles per second and an intensity of 60 decibels reaches the loudness-level of 50 phons. A vibration of the same intensity an octave higher (the pitch of the first overtone, with 400 cycles per second) would reach a loudness-level which we may estimate by eye as about 58 phons. Vibrations of the same intensity at the pitches of the second, third, and fourth overtones (with 600, 800, and 1,000 cycles per second respectively) would reach loudness-levels of about 60 phons. Dr. Fletcher made many experiments on the loudness produced by combining vibrations whose periods formed a harmonic series, as these do. Discussion of the results would be too difficult for a paper such as this. For example, a tone of lower frequency tends to mask one of higher frequency. On the other hand a tone of higher frequency may lie in a region for which the ear is more sensitive than it is at a lower frequency, as exhibited in our example. In general this last is the more important effect. In particular it is so to a marked extent for the overtones of notes below, say, G of the treble clef. We shall not misrepresent the experimental evidence by assuming that if our five vibrations, all of equal intensity, were set in motion simultaneously the higher ones would contribute more than their fair share to the loudness of the complete tone heard. Now the G string of the violin is rich in overtones: an experimental analysis of a typical vibration discovered the greater part of its energy in the wavelets that correspond to the first and second overtones, and most of the rest was found in those corresponding to the third and fourth overtones, though the seventh overtone (3 octaves above the fundamental) was important. The fundamental itself was faint. The vibrations we have taken in our imaginary example therefore fall far short of reality on the open G string itself. It is

evident that the loudness of the tone we hear (compounded by the ear from the vibrations corresponding to the fundamental and all the overtones) must depend in the main on the overtone structure. It would, in fact, be decidedly greater than the loudness which would correspond to the total energy of the whole complex vibration if it were concentrated at the pitch of the fundamental.

On many musical instruments the overtones that matter include at least the first five. In the notes of reed instruments overtones up to the seventh or eighth are important and on the violin even higher. Dr. Fletcher made experiments and computations with the loudness produced by combining pure tones, produced by an electrical generator, and corresponding to the fundamental and the overtones of notes of typical musical instruments. Spreading the total energy over the overtone structure, instead of concentrating it at the pitch of the fundamental, was found to be responsible for a rise of some 10 phons or more in the loudness of notes of normal pitches. He remarked¹⁰ "These quantitative results show why it is easy to increase the loudness of a musical tone by increasing its overtone content, a practice which is common in producing musical tones. Practically all the loudness of the tones from the piano strings of low pitch is due to the higher overtones". The experiments we are thinking about explain why a reed stop on the organ would sound louder than a stopped diapason that used the same amount of wind, for the stopped diapason is weak in overtones and lacks the first and third ones altogether.

Reflecting on the preceding paragraphs we find out why, on the organ, the addition of the principal, the fifteenth, and mixtures adds so much to the loudness of the open diapason. They add more effectively to the loudness than does the building up of 8 ft. flue stops. If we had two identical open diapason pipes (free from mutual interference) the addition of the second one would increase the loudness of the first one by only 3 phons, unless they were down in the bass where phons and decibels part company. The second diapason when sounded with the first obviously doubles the total energy of vibration of the first alone. On the other hand a decibel denotes an increase of the intensity 1.26 times. A second and third decibel would each make a similar increase, like the increase we call compound interest. The reader is recommended to multiply 1.26 by itself twice. To three significant figures the answer will be 2.00; thus a 3 decibel increase doubles the actual intensity or energy, which is what the second diapason does. We can therefore see why the stopped diapason, which contains in proportion to its total sound more 8 ft. tone than the open, adds negligible loudness to the open. A reed stop such as the tromba or corneopean adds more effectively to the loudness for a given consumption of energy from the blower because it is rich in overtones. In the deep bass, however, conditions are not quite the same, because the loudness-level curves in Fig. 3 crowd more closely together there. An increase of intensity by 3 decibels would give an increase of loudness of more than 3 phons.

Incidentally the preceding paragraph will warn the reader not to add

¹⁰ *J. Acoust. Soc. Amer.*, 1934, 6, 63.

together the intensities, in decibels, of the fundamental and the overtones to obtain the total intensity of a tone. Thus, if we suppose the first and second overtones of the G string of a violin to have intensities of 50 decibels each,¹¹ their combined intensity would be 53 decibels. To add together two loudness-levels of 50 phons and say that the total loudness would be 100 phons would be a great mistake. That is why in this article I assigned no intensities to the several overtones of the G string of the violin although typical figures are available, for they might have proved a snare for the unwary.

In part I of this paper we learnt that loudness depends partly on intensity and partly on frequency. I hope that part II has convinced the reader that it also depends, partly, on overtone structure.

One final comment may be added. In *Decibels and Phons* I attempted to make the term "phon" known to musicians; and for that purpose I sought for some feature of this loudness-interval that could be related to their experience of differences of loudness. I found it in the fact that, for a tone corresponding to vibrations at the rate of 1,000 cycles per second, under normal conditions and at ordinary loudness-levels, the phon happens to be about the smallest loudness-interval we can detect in listening to two tones when each is sounded in turn with a short interval of time between them. We have now learnt that the phon rests on the scale of decibels, the phon being tethered, by definition, to the decibel at 1,000 cycles per second; and the decibel scale is pure physics, quite independent of our hearing faculty. That the phon happens to correspond, roughly, to the smallest loudness-difference we can detect, in the circumstances I have carefully described, is pure coincidence. If we clearly understand this it becomes a convenient, though fortuitous, coincidence. But we should also learn that, even limiting ourselves to this pitch, we should find the smallest perceptible difference of loudness between two very faint tones to be much greater than a phon, while the smallest perceptible difference of loudness between two tones much louder than those of ordinary loudness-levels is less than a phon.

APPENDIX

In this article, to introduce the physicist's decibel to musical readers, an analogy has been drawn between a decibel and a major third. It is important to realize that the analogy is pure coincidence; but if we choose the right major third the analogy happens to be exact. For this we shall need the average of nine tempered major thirds and one true major third. Thus a bel is a tenfold increase of the intensity of vibration of a musical note, whereas 3 octaves and a major third is a tenfold increase of the rate of vibration of a musical note. In each octave there are 3 major thirds of equal temperament, while the true major third has a ratio 5 : 4. Thus using seven-figure logarithms:—

The log. of a tempered major third	= 0.1003433 (32)	
The log. of nine tempered major thirds	= 0.9030900 (1)	
The log. of a true major third	= 0.0969100 (2)	
The sum of (1) and (2) correct to seven places of decimals	= 1.0000000 (3)	

The logarithm of the major third we have chosen will therefore be one-tenth of (3), and this is 0.1000000. We have seen that, for all practical purposes, this is the logarithm of a decibel (see footnote 4)—an astonishing coincidence.

¹¹ Actually in the "typical vibration", described above, the wavelet corresponding to the second overtone has considerably greater intensity than that of the first overtone. The energy of its vibration, measured *directly* as we measure inches, *i.e.* not measured in decibels, is nearly half the total energy of the whole complex vibration of the string, though if it could be heard separately its pitch would be D near the top of the treble stave.

Brahms' opus 51—a Diptych

BY

WILLIAM G. HILL

It is now nearly eighty years since the first two quartets of Johannes Brahms were published in 1873. As in the case of the majority of works deserving "masterpiece" rating, during such a passage of time a quantity of commentary has appeared, laudatory or otherwise. With notable consistency the two works that make up this *opus*, though grouped together, have been regarded with surprise because of the great differences that, according to the commentators, seem to place them at diverse stages of the composer's life. The fact that Brahms himself states that he had composed, and consigned to the waste-basket, some twenty or more quartets before his first were published, might lead one to suppose that he had chosen the most promising examples from this fund more or less at random for this first public offering—and that thus picked at random they would exhibit no mutual relationship. The first, in C minor, is said to be stormy and the second, in A minor, serene. Furthermore, they seem to represent two distinct styles of composition. Owing to the fact that the composer is known to have kept works by him, sometimes for a period of years, it has been suggested that these may belong to two quite different periods in the composer's development. It does seem that much time passed after these works were begun before they were published—Kalbeck estimates fourteen years in one case. There has been much difference of opinion as to which quartet was begun first. Because of its storminess, and because storminess is apt to be an attribute of youth, the majority of commentators seem to think that the C minor was the earlier, though Kalbeck himself inclines toward the priority of the A minor. It is difficult to see why it should have been necessary for Kalbeck to rely on internal evidence for the date of origin when it would seem that he might so easily have had the true information directly from his friend Brahms. But in spite of this he does so argue. In any case, is it not likely that a work that had been on hand for a number of years would have been reworked before publication so that most of the evidences of the earlier origin would have disappeared in the published version?

Viktor Urbantschitsch, a commentator of unusual insight, sees in the career of Brahms four periods of creative effort. The first of these shows a relatively unrestrained, exuberant quality that he soon realized must somehow be restrained to achieve the unity he desires. In the second period he finds various means of controlling this exuberance. These means are for the most part external, merely joining together different themes by the use of some common cement of counterpoint and gaining unity thereby. The third period shows a great increase in economy of means through the use of a "basic motive", or some such device, variations of which supply the chief themes themselves as well as transitions and all linking materials. Variation will obviously be the most important technique employed in this treatment. The works of this

period differ from the former in that they deal with an internal working out. Where compositions of the first of these two types of sonata-form use an *inductive* means, working from part to whole, those of the second type show the use of a *deductive* method, working from whole to part. But Urbantschitsch specifically points out that the composer does not discard one method on finding the other; he employs either as it may seem appropriate. The second of these methods shows the ultimate in economy of material thus far obtained. The fourth period offers no new type. It merely used the preceding ones in masterly examples. The dates of these four periods may be roughly given as 1853-57, then to c. 1872, to 1883, and to the end of his career. These classifications are, of course, not mutually exclusive but overlap in numerous ways.

Now our two quartets date from the beginning of the third of these periods. However they seem to have been begun, at least in the case of one of them, as early as 1859. But polishing through these fourteen years would undoubtedly have brought the finished product up to the level of 1873's methods.

Agreement has been pretty general in regard to the cyclism of the first Quartet in C minor, but by no means so general in regard to the second, in A minor. It is rather difficult to see why this should be, but in view of the fact we shall give the discussion of the second in greater detail than the first. D. G. Mason's comment that although the first Quartet shows strong elements of cyclic construction, the second shows "of cyclicism hardly a trace", is illustrative of one view. On the other hand, Karl Geiringer implies the opposite view when he says, "The union of all sections in the first movement (of the A minor), however, is still closer than in the C minor Quartet, because the whole movement, with all its different episodes, arises from the first nine bars of the main theme".¹ And the commentaries of Urbantschitsch and some others take similar stands.

Perhaps it will be well, before pursuing this discussion to its conclusion, to examine the quartets themselves to see what unifying devices are employed in them individually and to see whether any effort has been made to unify the *opus* itself.² First then, the structure of the C minor Quartet.

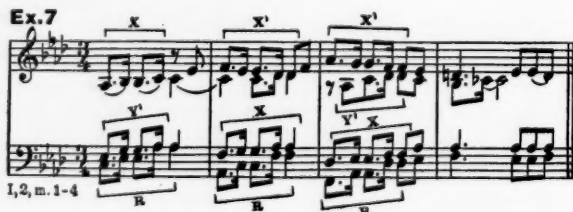
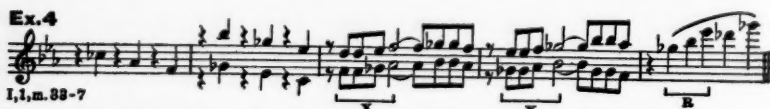
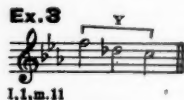
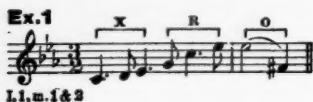
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The first Quartet in C minor has long been recognized as a cyclic structure and consequently I shall merely recapitulate as briefly as possible the points on which that cyclic structure hinges, giving examples that will clarify the situation as far as this first Quartet is concerned and that will be necessary for reference later when I undertake a comparison of the two quartets. The first two measures (or five beats) comprise a theme fragment that is made up of three

¹ Geiringer, Karl. *Brahms, His Life and Work*, New York (1947), p. 232.

² I have been fortunate in having had the collaboration of two intelligent students during the two phases of this investigation. The first, Miss Mary Mayhew, wrote a thesis, *A Comparative Analysis of the Quartets, Opus 51*, by Johannes Brahms (unpublished), dealing with its first phase. I am especially indebted, in its second phase, to Mr. Stanley Farwig, not only for preparing the music examples, but for calling my attention initially to the likeness between the basic motives of the two quartets in this *opus*. On this point I was an example of the many who had been blinded by Kalbeck's story.

motives, "x", "r", and "o" (see Ex. 1), that are in almost constant use, the "x" motive in particular appears in all four movements in one transformation or another. In combination with the "o" motive, sometimes directly and sometimes with an intervening figure usually composed of some variant of "r", it forms the most characteristic theme fragment of the Quartet as a whole (Ex. 2). The first subject is ternary in form and in its contrasting part appears the "y" motive (Ex. 3), with its quiet, elegiac character, a falling fourth, filled in by dropping either a second or a third, its first and second variants, and accompanied by numerous appearances of the "x" motive. The second subject, which is made up of an "a" and a "b" section, begins its "a" section with a motive derived from the "y" but spanning a fifth instead of a fourth with its intermediate note a third from either end (Ex. 4). Constant appearances of "x", either in its original form or inverted, continue this motive. Note also the use of motive "r" outlining a chord of the 6th instead of a $\frac{5}{4}$, at m. 37 and elsewhere; also the motive "x" in m. 70 and following (Ex. 5). The "b" section (m. 62) employs both "x" and "y" (Ex. 6).



In the second movement motive "x" appears immediately in the first measure in the second violin as the beginning of the principal melody. Simultaneously appear "y" retrograde in the viola, and "r" in the cello (Ex. 7). The first violin has inversions of "x" in measures two and three. Motive "y",

in measure 12 in the second variant, and again in measure m. 21 and in m. 24, in the first variant, comes in as a cadence forming device—the cadence being immediately restated in repeated eighth-note triplets, in which form the sub-theme enters in m. 27 accompanied in the two lower strings by the same motive inverted. The new theme here is based upon nothing more than the cadence of the preceding with this rhythmic change. The same theme appears again in the *coda*, making use of “y” in both its original aspects.

In the third movement, which is a song with trio, the principal song is in itself a complete, though miniature, sonata-form, with the trio a simple three part song form with a brief *codetta*. The sonata makes use primarily of the “x” motive. There is a counter-subject appearing with the main subject at the beginning. Both make extensive use of this motive (Ex. 9). There is minor use of the “y” motive—most significantly as a cadence figure, as at m. 14 (Ex. 10). This motive is, however, at the basis of the thematic material in the trio where it appears constantly.

Ex. 8

I, 2, m. 24-7

Ex. 9

I, 8, m. 1

Ex. 10

I, 8, m. 14

Ex. 11

I, 1, m. 98

Ex. 12

I, m. 33-6

Ex. 13

I, 4, m. 50-1

Ex. 14

I, 4, m. 68

Ex. 15

I, 4, m. 146-7

The fourth movement has, in its first two measures, motives “x” and “o” in unison and octaves in the four parts, *forte*, and in immediate association, *i.e.* without motive “r” (Ex. 2), and almost as it had been used in m. 98 of the first movement (Ex. 11). After a fairly constant use of the “x” motive in the measures that follow a new passage enters (at m. 33) of a *codetta*-like nature and that employs variants of both the “x” and the “y” motives—the “y”

motive being enlarged to four notes instead of three by the addition of a quarter note preceding the figure ("y" in its first variant) and rising a third to the initial note of the motive in question (Ex. 12). Then the new four note figure loses its last note, becoming a rise of a third and then a fall of the same interval (m. 38), then stretches its last interval to a fifth (m. 40). In this form, or with its last interval altered to a sixth (m. 44) and in diminution to half the original value (m. 41), this motive appears numerous times. Now at m. 50 a further alteration of the motive—rising a fourth to descend a second, and with a return to quarter notes—brings in the first section of the second subject (Ex. 13). After three statements of the 2-measured melodic fragment beginning thus, in sequence twice at intervals of a rising fourth, an extended series of agitated figures appears, the same figure—rising third and descending fifth—that had been used in the transition, and in the same manner—first in quarters, then in diminution as eighths. This passage of sixteen measures rises to a climax on the main motive of the movement (see Ex. 14). The second section of the second subject follows immediately with a very quiet and tranquil statement of the same material. The overall form has been sonatina or a sonata without a development. The recapitulation now follows with the customary restatement of all previously noted cyclic evidences. A *coda* follows in duple metre, which brings the main melodic idea of the movement to a great climax. Its final appearance, culminating in the third measure before the close, being almost a literal restatement of the initial two measures of the first movement (Ex. 15), the final plunge of "o", now for the first time in the movement, resolving naturally to the tonic triad.

* * * * *

Having seen that the first Quartet of our *opus* is definitely cyclic as a single, complete composition, it now remains to examine the second Quartet, that in A minor, to determine whether it may have a like construction. As examples of two diverse appraisals of this work we may cite the following well-known investigators. In his generally excellent book, *The Chamber Music of Brahms*, Daniel Gregory Mason, as has been mentioned, has this to say, "... while the first quartet is indeed strongly cyclic, and the third has cyclic elements, the second, though no less closely wrought than its companions, has of cyclicism hardly a trace". Urbantschitsch, on the other hand, whose purpose is not primarily to prove the cyclicism of the second Quartet but to assign it to his third period or the second manner of sonata formation, instead of the one next earlier to which he assigns the first Quartet, is not so readily quotable. This, because the third period assumes a cyclic principle at work and the mere assignment of a work to that period means that there is some sort of cyclicism as its basis. This makes short quotations less immediately striking without the argument of his complete thesis at hand. Nevertheless on page 276 of *Die Entwicklung des Sonatenform bei Brahms* he says, in speaking of the A minor Quartet: "Here there is rather no separate basic motive, but a use of the motive constituents of a melody for the themes and all subordinate ideas down to the last one". (We shall, however, refer to the two-measure unit, that we

find at the outset of the composition, as the basic motive of the A minor Quartet, since the next-ensuing motives, similarly used, are nonetheless used less importantly and less characteristically, and since it is very convenient to have a term to apply to this particular motive.) And he continues on the next page:

"One feels only too clearly by virtue of comparison of the two beginning movements—absolutely of equal value—how in the first instance stone upon stone, and phrase upon phrase, has been added together for a wonderful mosaic picture, and how in the second a great picture has been created with love and care down to the smallest detail—that is, in the former case, has been consummated by *inductive means* from part to whole, and in the latter, by *deductive means* proceeding from whole to part."

He goes on to describe the process by which such works as the second Quartet are constructed, as it were, by carving the whole structure from a single block of marble, and not building from a varied lot of different stones held together by a unifying mortar, as is the first Quartet example—at least in his thought. He then gives illustrative examples that show conclusively that it was a cyclic procedure that he had in mind. Indeed it is difficult to see how anyone could take the position of Mason, the cyclicism of the work seems so obvious. Let us examine the Quartet itself with this in mind.

The first two measures bring the first statement of a motive that is to appear with such frequency and so plainly as to make untenable Mason's statement. A slight variant appears accompanying this motive in these first two measures in the viola part (Ex. 16). Shortly before the end of the exposition (m. 120 *ff.*), at the beginning of the development (m. 129 *ff.*), just prior to the recapitulation (m. 165 and again at m. 177 *ff.*) and throughout section 3 of the *coda* (m. 321 *ff.*), the motive appears very frequently and unadorned except for occasional appearances in retrograde—scarcely subtle treatments. In subtle disguises it appears many other times and in the following movements as well, as we shall see.

Ex. 16

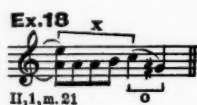
1st Vln.
Vla.
2nd Vln.
Cello

II, 1, m. 1-4 Retrograde

Immediately after the appearance of what may be called the basic motive of this first movement, there come in constant statements in one obvious variant or another of the motive that we encountered in the former Quartet as "x". In measure 3 we find it in inversion and in 16th notes. In measure 4, there is an up-beat figure in eighth notes that will be much used in the later course of the Quartet and that consists of the "x" motive in even eighth note values. At measure 19 and 20 motive "y" in its first variant also makes its appearance as the cadence of the first subject (Ex. 17).

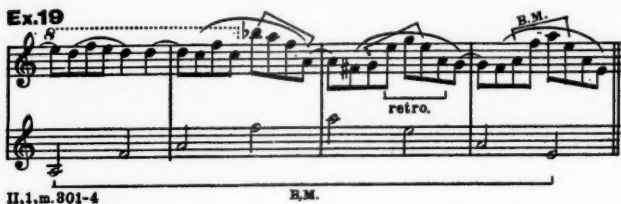
In measure 21 motives "x" and "o" make their appearance in very close association, even over-lapping (Ex. 18 and *cf.* Ex. 11). This is a characteristic

phenomenon that will appear frequently. Here it initiates the transition. The second subject is a quiet, graceful, *cantabile* melody line in the first and second violins associated in the viola and cello with essentially the same accompaniment that had been used for the first subject and thus composed of a diminution in quarters in the cello, and in triplet quarters in the viola, of the basic motive of the movement, variously handled. The melody line itself (Ex. 31 gives the 1st violin part) shows many reminiscences—of “y” retrograde in m. 47, “x” in m. 51, “r” in m. 53, and so forth. In the *codetta* of the exposition the “x” plus “o” figure appears several times, as at measures 107–8 where it is preceded by a three measure build-up, of which more in the sequel. The end of this *codetta* and the first four measures of the development have the interlocking statements of the basic motive of the movement, that have been previously mentioned.



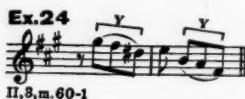
The development proper deals for the most part with the “x” motive in various versions. In m. 147 appears the introductory motive that introduced the “x” plus “o” motive-complex in the *codetta* to the exposition. It comes in several times with increasing importance until, after a great climax on “x” followed by numerous appearances of “x” in diminution in all four instruments in unison or octaves, it comes in again associated as a counterpoint with the initial melody of the movement *forte* in the cello. The basic motive is then taken, right side up and in inversion, by the first violin and the viola in the measures that constitute the retransition to the recapitulation.

This last feature is disguised on its entrance by the fact that it occurs on the fourth appearance of the basic motive. This fourfold statement, including the end of the transition, is arranged in groups of two, the individual statements showing a descending sequence of a fifth, and the two measure double statement also a sequence of a descending fifth. In addition, this second two measure unit has the basic motive syncopated—the half-note first unit coming in on beats 2 and 4 in this case. This brings the recapitulation in on a syncopated statement of the theme. There is now nothing essentially new until the *coda* enters. The first section of the *coda* starts as did the transition and in the same tonality (m. 290). Then appear the last three notes of the basic motive, the first being present, indeed, but disguised. Immediately the basic motive is stated again an octave lower. The whole eight-measure passage is then freely restated, with the basic motive extended by stating the rising figure twice and then falling from the two octave height thus attained by two similar statements of the falling figure (Ex. 19). In the final section (m. 321 *ff.*) of the *coda* there are successive statements, one in each voice, of the basic motive, the second and fourth times in retrograde motion. These have already been cited.



In the second movement the "x" motive is again the one most frequently employed. Example 20 shows the initial measures. Example 21, measures 9 and 10, shows the "x" inverted and in various kinds of diminution. This movement is essentially a rondo (ABA) form with the first sixteen measures of the return transposed to F major. Its "B" element resembles a highly compressed and miniature sonatina, however one in which the second subject is only remotely related in its two statements. This section, beginning at measure 43, in the key of F sharp minor, proceeds after only two measures to a melody of different contour and modulating to C sharp major. The second subject in the exposition is very brief—only four measures. The recapitulation begins in the latter part of bar 52. The first subject is here expanded to $4\frac{1}{2}$ measures. The material from m. 45 then returns transposed up a fourth, thus effecting the proper transition. The second subject retains only suggestions of its original appearance, is much expanded and makes use of the normal key of F sharp. At m. 70 a seven-measure retransition, making use of the coming subject matter, leads to the return of the "A" at first in F major and then, after sixteen measures, in the normal key of A. At ms. 93 and 94 there is a recollection of the basic motive, and throughout the rest of the movement are scattered numerous further variants of the "x" motive. At measure 108 appears the *coda*, making prominent use of the second subject of the B element.

The third movement, *Quasi minuetto, moderato*, opens with a hidden, acrostic-like statement of the basic motive (Ex. 22). Incidentally, in each quartet the third quasi-scherzo movement is a song with trio form. In the first the "principal song" is a sonata-form, and the trio a three-part song form; in the second, the reverse is the case—the "principal song" is a three-part form and the trio a sonata-, or rather sonatina form. This trio is *Allegretto vivace* instead of the *Tempo di minuetto* of the first part of the movement. It is made from several variants of the "x" and "o" motives (Ex. 23), and occasional



transformations of "y" (Ex. 24). There is a return to the minuet time for the transition to the recapitulation and also for the retransition to the *da capo*.

The finale is an almost unique structure. It is an *allegro* of a hurrying, urgent nature, with its theme emphasized by a superposed duple rhythm upon a triple measure, with these measures arranged in phrases of three bars rather than the more usual four. A more sustained theme makes its appearance at measure 45. This theme consists of two main sections considerably extended. Then a retransition, from measure 101 to 115, leads to a free restatement of the first theme followed by a free restatement of the second. At measure 198, and extending to 293, then follows a third statement of the two-theme unit. This is succeeded by an over-lapping entrance of the *coda* which extends to m. 359. This then gives the following pattern:

a C a F a A A+a
A-B-A'-B'-A-B'' Coda

The letters above those indicating the mere formal design represent the main tonalities involved. It seems to suggest the mere alternation of theme characteristic of the rondo. But the keys used are the normal ones, in the case of the first and third groups, for exposition and recapitulation of a sonata-form. They seem to suggest a structure somewhat like that of the finale of Schubert's piano Sonata in A minor, Op. 143, in which there are three statements of the material of a sonata exposition, but in which the tonalities employed are a, F, a, C, a, A—i.e. the last two groups form a sonatina pattern, which is augmented merely by a prior statement of the exposition and in which the second subject is assigned a different key for variety's sake. In our present case, however, while the choice of keys is exactly the same except for the first two Bs being reversed, there is a slightly different situation. Here the first

"B" key rather than the second is the normal one for an exposition. Also the second A and B are somewhat developed, although the total length is curtailed. At any rate this section represents to some extent a development—notably the "b" section of the second subject, where the material immediately preceding has been stated twice in sequence, increasing the length from four to eight measures. The "A" or first section has been curtailed by the failure of the second phase of a double period to reappear, and is altered by the change of the initial three-measure phrases to four measures by spinning out the terminal measures with canonic imitations at the octave. In the B element there is in this second statement a section that appeared originally in the first A section. This appears at measure 174—it had appeared at 31. A retransition of 12 measures over a dominant pedal leads to the recapitulation. The form of this last division lies much closer to the original form than did that just preceding. The *coda* consists of four variants of the A division, the last one in a much faster tempo, *Piu vivace*.

Thematically this finale presents the following picture. The first subject—or A division—makes most conspicuous use of the "x" motive, associated with the "o" motive (Ex. 25)—the "x" in a form that had appeared in measures four and five of the initial movement, and the combination "x" plus "o" either simply stated or broadened into climactic statements as at measures seven and eight or in a form similar to that that had appeared at m. 21 of the first movement. A veritable storm of "x" figures in eighth notes follows that broadens out into half and quarter notes, an augmentation of the "o" in the "x-o" combination at the point (m. 25) at which it reaches a *fortissimo* climax. All these features recur each time the first subject reappears, even in the quasi-development. In the transition there is a figure, based on the "x" motive, that appears first in quarter notes and then, after two statements, in eighths, continuing as counterpoint to the second subject (Ex. 26). The second subject itself makes considerable use of the "y" motive (Ex. 27), and is much more *cantabile* in nature than its predecessor. At measure 72 (Ex. 28) there appear two motives, in immediate succession: the "y", in its second variant *cancrizans* and the first three notes of the basic motive—finishing, however, with a descending second instead of a fourth. The retransition again employs very numerous statements of "x" and again brought together in a "storm of figures" just prior to the return of the first subject material. At m. 194, in the retransitional passage to the recapitulation, the main idea of the first subject appears in inversion and in diminution to equal eighth-note values (Ex. 29),





on an already established dominant pedal on E. This appears first in the viola and cello and then in all the instruments in unison and octaves, taking up in all four measures. Thereupon the final statement of the A-B combination ensues and of course each reappearance of a main division brings in the same thematic phenomena, with such additional treatments as at the very beginning where the initial motive is accompanied by the same motive in the cello in even eighths.

The A minor Quartet is thus also seen to be definitely cyclic in structure. Indeed, it is difficult to see how any other interpretation could be made, how any statement of the contrary attitude could conceivably be maintained.

* * * * *

Thus far we have examined the two quartets individually and have found each to be of well-developed cyclic construction. The Quartet in C minor, the first in our *opus*, has long been recognized as having such a structure and, consequently, we have limited ourselves to a demonstration of the fact with a minimum of explanation. The second Quartet, that in A minor, has also been similarly recognized, though by no means with such great unanimity. We now come to a consideration of the two quartets as a possible unit. Are there traits common to both works? Is the *opus* in itself a cyclic unit? Has it in any way, to borrow a term from the graphic arts, the character of a "diptych"?

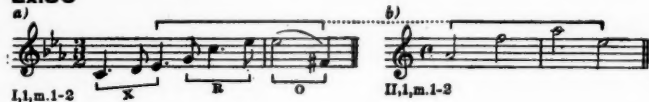
The first measures of each of the two works show motives (in the first violin part) that superficially seem to have little in common. However on closer consideration they may be seen to have a near affinity. This would no doubt have been sooner appreciated had there not been an explanation already given by Max Kalbeck, Brahms' biographer and intimate, who could no doubt have got his information directly from the source; thus his statements have been given the unthinking credence and respect that first-hand information usually receives. That this direct source might be of questionable value can be seen, however, in Brahms' fondness for practical jokes, and his delight in misleading

his friends with false descriptions of new works, as when he described the work that eventually proved to be the fourth Symphony as "a set of waltzes and polkas", and the first Symphony as a "song". Then there is the fact that Kalbeck was forced to conjecture from internal evidence regarding the date of origin of this very A minor Quartet when, one would suppose, he might have had the information so easily from Brahms himself. However that may be, he has the following to say, in his *Johannes Brahms*, II, 2, p. 44:

"The ground-motive, in which the 'enthusiastic' chief melody of the A minor Quartet has its roots, recalls Joachim's ancient motto, 'Frei aber einsam!' (FAE). With the three words is expressed all the youthful happiness of that unforgettable, fateful time, so rich in hope, which Joachim and Brahms spent with one another on the Rhine and in Hanover. And if the friend had looked at it more closely and had listened more attentively to what it had to say, he would have recognized the solution of the clue which Brahms introduced as a variant of the motto, FAF,* in the rearranged intervals, AFA. The two are most intimately bound together as if the composer wished to say: 'Only arm in arm with you can I challenge Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven—only if you stand by my side will I achieve a master quartet'."

A very pretty story! And commentators have with one accord followed him, repeating the story and thus effectively beclouding the issue. But some man-handling of the motive is required to make it fit! The quartets are *not* dedicated to Joachim but to Theodor Billroth; that does not mean a great deal as they seem to have been originally intended for him and to have been so inscribed, and the withdrawal of the original dedication seems to have taken place after the works had been completed or nearly so, so that the composer was already committed to the use of this motive and the quartet itself was too satisfactory a job to be discarded. The actual situation seems rather to be that the explanation given concerns itself with much too trifling a matter for serious consideration when dealing with subject matter for a major composition. Nevertheless, as was said, the statement made by Kalbeck has blinded all subsequent commentators to any connection that this motive may have to the basic motive of the other Quartet, a matter of unquestionably greater importance to any musical building process than a mere pretty story about purely extra-musical matters. Let us look for a moment at Ex. 30. The first two

Ex. 30



measures of both quartets are given. The quotation from the C minor Quartet shows an *arpeggio* rising a tenth, starting slowly—the first interval being filled with a passing note—and then rocketing up. The rise fills a broad measure— $3/2$ time—then hangs at the crest on a half note before it plunges downward through an interval of a diminished seventh—like an exhausted rocket. The passage has already been described as containing three separate motives that

* Frei aber froh!

of the "x-r-o" sequence that makes up the principal idea of the C minor Quartet. It occurs thus in the characteristic main idea of the fourth movement of the C minor (I, 4, 1), also many times in the A minor, as at measures 107-8 in its first movement, in measures 44-5 of the third movement and in measures 7-8 and ms. 124 and 204 and elsewhere in the finale. In the instance from the first movement, however, the introductory measures from m. 104 are very significant, for they very nearly quote ms. 12-14 of I, 4. This occurs several times (Ex. 32, (a) I, 4, 12-14, (b) II, 1, 104-108). A nearly related example appears in ms. 125-9 of I, 1, which very closely resembles m. 159-162 in II, 1 (Ex. 33). These instances are highly significant since the fragment concerned

Ex. 32**Ex. 33**

covers several measures, precluding the possibility that they are merely unconscious or accidental.

This, we believe, will suffice to demonstrate the fact that both quartets, however different in appearance and method, derive fundamentally from the same sources. The quartets are individually and independently cyclic. They show a masterly economy of means that makes for a remarkable unity of individual achievement.

The quartets are, however, of very different external appearance. The restlessness and storminess of the C minor gives way to the calmness and serenity of its successor. There is nothing at all in this that militates against a very notable unity between these two very distinct elements. The first Quartet shows a struggle, a striving up to a point eventually attained. The epic that embodies this struggle is thus a complete thing in itself, a unified exposition of that struggle. It is entirely satisfactory in itself as a separate entity. But after that point is attained, after the struggle has finally brought about achievement, there may be a period of basking in that rarified ether. This the quiet and serenity of the A minor work represents. The earthly struggle is climaxed by heavenly serenity. And the two phases of this drama are stated with admirable consistency and truth to the psychological situation which confronts them. The two types of movement, noted by Urbantschitsch,

are thus called for by the two artistic purposes, the artistic necessities that build up a unit, not by means that are technical or merely temporal, conditioned by chronology or technical development achieved at a given point of time, but by means of more universal application. The two manners of sonata construction once discovered are henceforth available when wanted—when they seem to be appropriate. In Op. 51 they are both eminently appropriate to the purpose of forming the separate elements of struggle and eventual achievement that are involved in our drama—that form two separate pictures that can be seen as units or may blend into a broader composition—in other words, that form a *diptych*.

Hugo Wolf and "Funiculì, funiculà"

BY

HANS F. REDLICH AND FRANK WALKER

LUIGI DENZA, born at Castellamare in 1846, settled in London in 1879, according to Grove's Dictionary, and in 1883, according to Schmidl's Dizionario. The existence of an English song, "Good Night", words by Longfellow, published at Milan in 1879, and of Italian songs published in London in 1882, suggests that the date given in *Grove* is the more likely to be correct. The point is not without interest because it would seem that some of Denza's most thoroughly Neapolitan songs, including "Funiculì, funiculà", were written in this country. The title-pages of the following six show that they were composed for the annual Piedigrotta festival at Naples:

"Funiculì, funiculà"	(1880)
"Zin, zin, zin, zin"	(1881)
"Lo Telefono"	(1882)
"Uocchie nire"	(1883)
"Napole"	(1884)
"Duorme!"	(1885).

The tingling vitality and gusto of the first three of these, at least, sets them somewhat apart from the rest of their composer's early Neapolitan ditties, which are generally broken-hearted love-laments. At a later date Denza, comfortably established as a fashionable singing-teacher in London, like his friend Tosti whose position was very similar, devoted himself to the English ballad. The transition from the streets of Naples to the drawing-rooms of London represented, socially, an indubitable advance; artistically, however, it brought with it a rather disastrous decline:

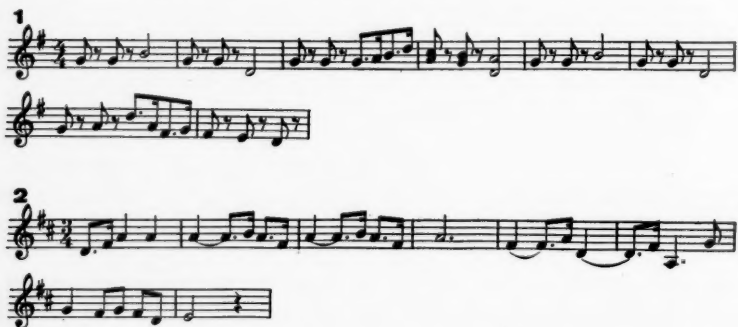
"Funiculì, funiculà" will suffice to keep Denza's memory green for a long time to come. From the first it attracted the attention of serious musicians. Richard Strauss, as is well known, made use of it in the last movement of *Aus Italien* in 1886. Ten years later Hugo Wolf fell completely under its spell, and made it for a period his "morning and evening prayer". Alfredo Casella employed it in his *Italia* in 1909.

In August, 1896, Wolf and his friend Heinrich Potpeschnigg were on their way from Brixlegg, in Tyrol, to Graz. They broke their journey at Toblach and visited Cortina d'Ampezzo. It was in the course of this little tour of the Dolomites that Wolf heard "Funiculì, funiculà" for the first time. He was sitting with his friend in an inn at Misurina when some Italians at the next table struck up the song, to guitar and mandoline accompaniment. Completely captivated, Wolf gave money to the performers and insisted on innumerable encores, which he frenziedly applauded. It was all Potpeschnigg could do to get him away. After that he was heard humming or whistling the song all day long.

Ernst Decsey, in his big Wolf biography of 1903-06, stated (Vol. 3, p. 153) that "Funiculi, funiculà" was to have been used in the tarantella finale of the projected *Italian Serenade* in several movements. Later writers have supposed that the song was actually employed in the fragmentary Tarantella (about forty bars) existing in manuscript. In *THE MUSIC REVIEW* for August, 1947,* it was pointed out that this was not the case; so far as Wolf had taken the work "Funiculi, funiculà" had not appeared.

Sketches for a work introducing Denza's song have recently been identified. They occur in a musical note-book in the National Library, Vienna, devoted chiefly to *Penthesilea*. Dated 28th December, 1897, they were thus written when Wolf was in Dr. Svetlin's asylum. The tarantella fragment is dated 2nd December, 1897, and it seems most likely that the "Funiculi, funiculà" sketches were intended rather for the so-called "third" *Italian Serenade* which Wolf began to draft out on 18th December. The music seems to be of the nature of a slow introduction leading to a finale that would have been dominated by "Funiculi, funiculà".

Most of the music written by Wolf in Dr. Svetlin's asylum is remarkable for its extraordinary banality. For the time his critical faculties were dormant and he quite happily set down, among twenty-three "Themes from October and November of the year 1897", "inspirations" such as these:



For the "third" *Italian Serenade*, on 18th December, he chose two of the best of this set of themes; he was much nearer normality at this time, but the music still wanders rather aimlessly. Ten days later—less than a month before his release from the asylum—he was musically in his right mind again. This can be doubted by no-one who examines the truly magnificent "Funiculi, funiculà" fragment.

It opens in what is unmistakably the mood of the Michelangelo songs of the previous March, into which, after a splendid, very Wolfian modulation, the theme of Denza's song bursts like a ray of sunshine. One asks oneself what sort of finale could have followed this introduction? It would have had to have been something Nietzschean, full of Dionysian frenzy.

* Frank Walker, "The History of Wolf's *Italian Serenade*".

46

for publication

A handwritten musical score on ten staves. The notation is dense and includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and beams. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The notation is written in a cursive, handwritten style. The score is organized into measures by vertical bar lines. The handwriting is somewhat faded and the paper shows signs of age.

t
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"Wohl denk ich oft an mein vergangnes Leben"—were these words from the first of the Michelangelo songs at the back of Wolf's mind as he sat in the asylum and sketched out this piece? Did "Funiculì, funiculà" become for him a sort of charm, a symbol of life beyond the walls within which he was confined? Perhaps, but far from certainly. For there is no sign of brooding melancholy in his letters at this time; his mood during this first period of confinement was one of indignation and extreme arrogance; he anticipated the conquest of the whole world by his music. However that may have been, the "Funiculì, funiculà" fragment composed on 28th December, 1897, represents the last flicker of genius, the last truly creative effort of Wolf's mind, before the onset of the final darkness.

1) Or: Oktaven 2) Or: Oktaven 3) Or: Oktaven (erased)

4) Or.

5) Or. Small notes missing in original

Music in Berlin

BY

EVERETT HELM

THE saying "Berlin bleibt Berlin" (Berlin remains Berlin) is as true to-day as ever it was. This remarkable city continues to have an atmosphere all its own and to maintain an intellectual and cultural level that sets it apart from all other German cities. Nevertheless things have changed, and changed enormously, not only since the war but more especially in the past year. Until a year ago there was still a great deal of cultural *rapprochement* between the two sectors of Berlin, the East (Russian) and the West (allied). A certain rift came, it is true, with the blockade, but after its lifting in the spring of 1949 cultural relations returned practically to normal. Artists—singers, instrumentalists, conductors—appeared in both sectors; the public circulated freely, attending a concert in the West sector one night, the opera in the East sector the next. This freedom of circulation no longer exists—unfortunately. Unfortunately because the people and the artists of Berlin are the losers. The artists have in effect only half as much work as previously; the people have half as many theatres, opera houses, concerts. Through the division of Berlin into two halves, each part has become less than one half of the former whole.

There is no law nor regulation forbidding artists performing on both sides of the iron curtain. It is sheerly as the result of the ever-worsening political situation that they have come to the point where it is no longer practical or feasible. Those artists that appear in the Soviet sector are "encouraged" to become communist party members and to join in the anti-West propaganda movement in one form or another, and they are faced in an increasingly acute form with the problem of choosing sides. If they decide in favour of the East, they are no longer acceptable in the West. Most of the more prominent ones have decided in favour of the West and have left the East permanently. But less fortunate, less prominent artists are faced with a desperate situation if their homes are in the East. They have no assurance that they will find employment or be able to make a career in the West, where everything is overcrowded, partly with refugees that have already crossed over, and where jobs and engagements are scarce. The majority are thus obliged to remain in the East and to make a show, at least, of being good communists.

The artist who lives in West Germany can no longer appear in the East without making himself *persona non grata* to westerners and running the risk of receiving no future engagements in the West. This is particularly true of radio appearances, since the radio has become in East Germany little more than a propaganda instrument. Formerly Berlin artists had broadcasts in two large radio stations: Radio Berlin (Russian-controlled) and RIAS (American-owned); to-day they must make their choice, and most of them choose RIAS and the West German stations. Practically the only remaining Soviet-controlled organization where western artists still appear is the Berlin State Opera, which has somehow remained relatively aloof from politics. There are many western artists, however, who cannot risk entering the East sector of Berlin (and even less the East zone of Germany) for fear they might not come back—artists who have in one way or another demonstrated their anti-communist feelings or taken part in anti-communist movements, as well as all those who have fled from the Soviet zone or sector.

As to the public—it has arrived of its own free will, so to speak, at the decision to stay in its own back yard. There is no physical reason why West Berliners should not continue to attend opera and theatre in East Berlin; there are no barriers between the sectors, no special documents are required, and there are no controls of any kind. Admission prices are as a matter of fact much lower in the East sector. The barriers that exist are of a purely psychological nature, reflecting the growing political tension between East and West. Many a West Berliner states that he simply doesn't wish to subject himself to the unpleasant atmosphere of distrust, suspicion and fear that pervades East Berlin. In addition to this is the fact that theatre and music in East Berlin are by no means so interesting as they were a year or two ago. At that time many excellent works,

including modern music and theatre, were to be seen and heard in the Soviet sector in excellent performances. In the meantime, however, "cultural reforms" have been instigated and new aesthetic-political lines established by the communist party. "Decadent" and "formalistic" art is now strictly defined and strictly excluded—in short, the most interesting and important art of our time. In the field of music, for instance, "formalistic" art includes Stravinsky, Hindemith, Berg, Schönberg and all other twelve-tone composers, Honegger, Milhaud, and most of the earlier works of Prokofiev and Shostakovich, to mention only a few.

The BBC's Victory over Schönberg

BY

HANS KELLER, WITH A FOOTNOTE BY DONALD MITCHELL

SCHÖNBERG dies. The horde, true to primordial savage precedent, falls upon the father and devours him. *Music and Letters*, orgiastically forgetful of its otherwise unceasing respectability, publishes, instead of an obituary, a symposium in which the half-grown and the senile vie with each other in murdering the dead. Marion Scott secures herself a place in the annals of posterity by compressing her reaction to Schönberg and his death into a single sentence: "Inevitable, no doubt; but not interesting". Richard Capell, a man of otherwise impeccable culture and taste, has made himself responsible for printing a collection of wrong facts and infantile opinions which soon becomes ill-famed over the whole of musical Europe. Nor does the daily and weekly press wish to stand aside when all have their mouths full, and "obituaries" are published which betray the psychological root of the death-notice rather than its cultural purpose. It remains to uncultural, money-ridden, ruthless America, it remains to the *New York Times*, to pay homage to the adopted son, to end its obituary tribute with the words: "We are proud to have been his contemporaries".

But the ambivalence towards the murdered father has two opposite sides, and the fear of retaliation, more widely known as remorse, presently sets in. *Music and Letters* accepts a reasoned article *In Defence of Schönberg*, and the Third Programme launches an extended Schönberg series which does not bring the composer any satisfaction or money; for, on the contrary, he had to pay for it with his death.

Sure enough, it immediately emerges that the series is a child of ambivalence rather than of unmixed love. It emerges from the choice of the editor, of the speakers, of the performers, it emerges from the general disorganization* which includes the provision of disastrously short rehearsal times in at least three important instances. Nevertheless, ambivalence has two opposite sides, and though the negative side gains the upper hand, the series comes to include events for which the artistic listener has to be unqualifiedly grateful. In fact, the listener too is forced into a position of ambivalence.

(1) The *General Editor* is Michael Tippett, who approaches his task unprejudiced by any digested knowledge. It is at once apparent that the Third has chosen the "objective approach"—a wonderful rationalization of ambivalence which conveniently forgets that, applied to an as yet esoteric composer, objectivity must needs mean ignorance. The result is, according to the informed listener's temperament, tragic or comic in the extreme. Tippett tries his pathetic best (his second talk is already less windy than his first), he learns as quickly and as much as he can, but it is humanly impossible for him to emerge, in the short time at his disposal, as anything else but a good pupil at his best, and a bad pupil at his second-best. His *status*, however, is that of a teacher, to which his preaching tone gives the finishing touch. More than half of his facts are wrong, and less than half of his thoughts are baked. He dabbles here, he dabbles there, he leaves a muddle everywhere. At one point he tries himself as a brilliant second-rate journalist of the effective variety, at others he tries his hand at philosophy, mysticism, astrology,

numerology, comparative psychology and sociology, all the time fitting his facts to his fancies, which isn't difficult since the former are few and the latter inconstant. At the same time his actual insight into Schönberg's music runs continuously near the zero level, so that practically every remark on the music itself contains a hair-raising technical or emotional blunder. And when he comes to compare Schönberg to Freud—a parallel which, alas, he may have from me: I should have gone into it or else not mentioned it at all—he shows that his knowledge of Freud and psychoanalysis equals his understanding of Schönberg and twelve-tone music. Nevertheless, an impressive parallel emerges, for two misconceptions will parallel each other as neatly as their unrecognized facts if they arise in the same brain which misunderstands similar *data* in a similar manner. I have the greatest respect for Tippett the composer and Tippett the thinker, but none for his accepting this job: it is as if I were to accept the general editorship of a Sibelius or Delius series.

(2) *Of the other speakers*, three are outstanding: Seiber on Schönberg's technique, Clark on the Berlin, and Kolisch on the American years: islands of facts in a sea of unoriginal and irrelevant phantasies. Wellesz is another of those wonderfully ambivalent, "objective" selections: the only Schönberg pupil who has turned away from Schönberg. He makes an honest job of his talk and tries indeed to be objective, but that is not enough, for his waning interest in Schönberg renders him incompetent, in fact ignorant, as far as the composer's later works and theoretical concepts are concerned. It is sad to get from the first and enthusiastic Schönberg biographer such doubly wrong information as that "from now on" (*i.e.* after *Pierrot Lunaire*) Schönberg used as the basis for every (*sic*) composition a theme (*sic*) consisting of all the notes of the chromatic scale, or that Schönberg rejected "atonal" in favour of "atonical", which was true enough at the time, but meanwhile the composer, in his as yet unpublished book on *Structural Functions of Harmony*, had (without Wellesz' knowledge) developed the concept of "pantonality" instead. Besides, Wellesz mistranslates a crucial passage in Schönberg's manifesto-like programme note for the "George" Songs, putting "craftsmanship" for "Sicherheit". The motley array of speakers includes Alan Pryce-Jones who isn't even a musician and fortunately knows absolutely nothing about Schönberg so that he is compelled to confine himself to irrelevant remarks on "The Background of Old Vienna" (Schönberg should have listened to that one!), and Alfred Polgar, whom to interview the BBC apparently pays Tippett a journey to Switzerland, the yield being of course nil, for Polgar (a first-class essayist, literary and dramatic critic and with Freud the best German stylist since Schopenhauer) knows as much about Schönberg as any old Viennese intellectual.

(3) In the *selection of performers* too, an ambivalent attitude, or/and an abysmal ignorance is apparent, in that there is a definite tendency to choose well qualified musicians for the one job for which they aren't. The second Quartet is given to the New London, whose highly promising young leader hasn't the first idea about this music (already the *tempo* of the opening finishes everything) and to Patricia Neway (somewhat better in *Erwartung*) whose approach could not be wrong; the best possible, because practical criticism of her performance is unintentionally given by Wellesz when he plays the opening of the fourth movement on a record of an excellent performance: suddenly the virginal listener understands what the music means. Perhaps the most amusing case is that of the "George" Songs which are given, at outrageously short notice, to Esther Salaman and Paul Hamburger. Musical musicians, and unprejudicedly adventurous ones too, in all conscience, but the trouble is that Schönberg did not write the work for mezzo (a fact which the BBC, with its thorough objectivity, does not find out), so that Miss Salaman has to transpose some of the Songs and thereby eliminate the harmonic structure from the performance. Literally opposite Broadcasting House sits Erwin Stein, Schönberg's oldest pupil, the first exponent of the twelve-tone method, and the first coach of the "George" Songs.

The series has not finished at the time of writing, but the BBC's score over Schönberg is so high that victory is certain.

* The "general disorganization" is no matter of opinion. It is fact; and it discloses itself unashamedly in the Third Programme's choice of repetitions. Normally I would hardly cavil at the repetition of Schönberg talks; but when talks are repeated and performances not, *i.e.* when we have words (all the rotten ones included) *twice* over and music but *once* (with a few exceptions) then the Third Programme's concept of "culture" is exposed with painful clarity. It was Schönberg who wrote, in *Style and Idea*, that

... since musicians have acquired culture and think they have to demonstrate this by avoiding shop-talk, there are scarcely any musicians with whom one can talk about music.

But even in his most visionary pessimism he could hardly have envisaged a broadcast series devoted to his own works where the music would be swamped by a torrent of largely misleading words on anything and everything but the music itself.

Consider what the musical repetitions consist of: inclusively, *Gurrelieder*, *Erwartung*, *Der Tanz um das goldene Kalb*—all large-scale, enormously expensive works, all, it goes without saying, severely under-rehearsed and given, at their best, not more than respectable interpretations; and all performed twice. The *Gurrelieder*, in fact, receives a less than respectable performance; not even Rankl's considerable musicality can contend with short rehearsal time and short winded, because hopelessly miscast, singers. But why perform the *Gurrelieder* live (and badly, and therefore dead) when a superior recorded performance already exists on deleted HMV records in the BBC library? A superiority which is rammed home when Dr. Wellesz quotes an extract from "So tanzen die Engel". (Dr. Wellesz lets two whopping cats out of the bag when he plays records of the second Quartet and the *Gurrelieder*. The BBC should have drowned them if it wanted to keep its own mediocre failures secret.) Economically speaking the Third Programme's *Gurrelieder* performances prove that immense financial resources are squandered unnecessarily when they might usefully be diverted elsewhere. Use the recording of the *Gurrelieder* and probably the rehearsal time of both *Erwartung* and *Der Tanz* is automatically doubled. But it seems that the Third Programme's conscience is satisfied by quantity, with not a thought for quality. *Gurrelieder*, *Erwartung*, *Der Tanz* make an effective façade of comprehensiveness and generosity. "We have done our lavish best", the planners crow—but done, I suggest, only harm. Indisciplined generosity can, in certain cases, be more damaging than parsimony.

Odder still, the afore-mentioned orchestral works, in spite of their disparity of period, all, on friend or foe alike, make an immediate impact; whereas much of the chamber music, the songs, the piano music, the highly condensed orchestral pieces, require more than a single hearing, especially by the inexperienced Schönberg listener. Yet it is just the programmes devoted to this class of work which are not repeated—not one of them. The talks, note well, are repeated; the comparatively accessible big orchestral works are repeated; every programme is repeated except those which need repetition most; and, as it happens, they are the briefest and least expensive. What sort of planning is this? How is it that the most elementary principles of programme building are overlooked? (And not only principles, but works also. What has become of the excellent recording of the *Survivor from Warsaw* broadcast on 9th January last year and never heard of since? It dismays that the BBC spends perhaps 18 minutes on Mr. Pryce-Jones and cannot spare 8 for the *Survivor*.)

No doubt the simple explanation for all this confusion and lack of proportion is the BBC's reluctance to employ the expert who knows what he is talking about. After all Mr. Stein is the foremost living authority on Schönberg's music and environment. And it is Mr. Stein, believe it or not, who is *not* invited to direct the series. What is the BBC's explanation for neglecting Mr. Stein? And why, I am obliged to inquire, whether it be rude of me or not, is the tax-payer being asked to subsidize Mr. Tippett's education in Schönberg's music?

Inevitably ludicrous things result in the absence of a supervising hand. A case in vital point arises over the performance of *Der Tanz*. A music editor's job is to intervene whenever the music's coherence is imperilled by extraneous invasions of an anti-musical nature. Mr. Tippett's intervention would have been sorely needed in order to prevent the senseless explanations of *Der Tanz*' scenic action which disrupt the piece (two full stops while an announcer does his worst) and destroy its organic unity. The verbal interpolations should be immediately excised. But Mr. Tippett is not to be seen and "production" plays havoc with a score of unparalleled majesty. Puccini is not manhandled in this manner, so why Schönberg?

Doubtless this joint survey of the Third Programme's Schönberg series will be deemed offensively controversial for all the facts' incontrovertibility. How much healthier it would have been had the series introduced an element of real controversy, and, instead of strait-jacketing Dr. Wellesz into a talk, the subject of which forced him to be unconvincingly convincing, had allowed him to give his reasons why he "turned away from Schönberg". This would have been the case *contra* Schönberg on a high level: controversy which could have been only beneficial.

In one of his talks the well-meaning Mr. Tippett quotes an extract from the text of Schönberg's oratorio *Die Jakobsleiter*:

Whether to the right, or to the left, forwards or backwards, uphill or down—you must go on never asking what lies in front or behind. . . .

A fine ethic for the artist and an admirable inscription for the tomb-stone which should be erected to commemorate the Third Programme's burial not only of Schönberg but of their own series besides.

First Performances

THE ECLECTICISM OF "WOZZECK"—II

Was du ererbt von deinen Vätern hast,
Erwirb es, um es zu besitzen.

GOETHE, *Faust I*, Night.

As in one previous instance, *i.e.* that of Alan Rawsthorne's outstanding first Symphony (see MR of a year ago), we are this time devoting the *First Performances* feature to a single work whose artistic achievement and historical import would appear amply to justify such exceptional treatment. It is true that the first performances which the BBC has given of Schönberg's own works likewise merit the closest possible attention, but they are reviewed on another page.¹ So was, in fact, the actual Covent Garden production of *Wozzeck*,² whence we are here free to continue the analytical reflections initiated in the November, 1951, issue of this journal under the present feature's title.

Two major conclusions were reached there: (1) that not merely the style, but even the content, the musical thought of *Wozzeck* were eclectic, and (2) that what was called the *development of and to the model*, an "intramusical progress *cum* historical and psychological regress" was observable in the work, a process which corresponded perhaps to a general or at any rate widespread tendency of the creative mind. Now that many readers will probably not only have heard *Wozzeck*, but also acquainted themselves a little more with *Wozzeck's* most powerful models, *i.e.* the musical thought of Schönberg, some further discussion of problems connected with our two conclusions might be welcomed.

(1) *The problem of original eclecticism.*

It was suggested in the first part of this article that almost all the way through *Wozzeck* Berg said something new, but that in particular Schönberg's influence seemed occasionally too new and powerful to allow sufficient amalgamation in Berg's mind. Readers who have meanwhile heard Schönberg's *Erwartung* will no doubt have remembered the latter suggestion, for lasting as is one's admiration for Berg's near-masterpiece, it cannot be denied that the effect of certain sections pales somewhat when one hears the original article. Every child will have noticed, for instance, that the *coda* of Berg's invention on a six-note chord (starting at the moment of Wozzeck's death and representing, on the surface or descriptive level, the ripples spreading over the pool) is an astonishingly faithful replica of the *coda* of *Erwartung*. Nevertheless, while on the one hand (as we have already partly seen) Berg's Schönbergian models are by no means confined to *Erwartung*, not even they, on the other hand, are very often used without originality; in fact, Berg's originality is at times strongest where his eclecticism is strongest. This is a neat and empty phrase; it needs filling up.

Readers will remember without difficulty the recitative passage (Ex. 1c) which constitutes the *Rückführung* to the second recapitulation of the symphony's (*i.e.* the 2nd act's) first (sonata) movement: it is the place where Wozzeck gives Marie money, and the sudden and soft C major chord, entering echo- or flageolet-like upon a terrific harmonic and dynamic intensification, has always aroused much discussion and been praised for its striking and original effect. But nobody has yet noticed (read: felt) that the passage derives, in formal context, even in thematic structure, harmonic implications, and of course in key, texture and colour, direct from Schönberg's second ("official") Quartet (Ex. 1b), and beyond that from Mahler's *Liedern eines fahrenden Gesellen* (Ex. 1a). It is difficult, but not impossible, to make a comparative evaluation between the Berg passage

¹ See p. 130 *et seq.*

² See MR, XIII/1, p. 52.

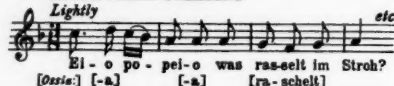
and its Schönbergian original. True, the Berg is operatic and the Schönberg, superficially, the approximate opposite, but after all, they are similar transitions in a sonata-form, so that "*mutatis mutandis*" does not remain a thoughtless qualification when one submits that the Schönberg is far superior as far as thematic integration, architectural function, logical melodism and—to put it all most comprehensively—emotional content is concerned. This, however, is a purely musical comparison and, as such, unfair, for it does not take Berg's dramatic context and dramatic meaning into account, and it is exactly here that his immense originality lies. So unprecedented, in fact, is this precedent passage in Berg's musico-dramatic connection that in aural view of it, worthy musicians have ceased to understand the chord of C major. As recently as October, 1951 (*Music and Letters*, p. 313), no less an authority than Gordon Jacob repeats the well-established nonsense that "the major triad became for [Schönberg] and his school the symbol of triteness and drabness," and that "in *Wozzeck*, for instance, the chord of C major is used by Berg to denote mean avariciousness". Nothing could be further from the emotional truth of the passage. Dr. Jacob and his forerunners have been so completely mystified by the unusual sensation of a motionless C major that they even fail to understand the text: who is avaricious? Wozzeck's line expresses Wozzeck's feelings, and Wozzeck is generous; Marie's notes (sorrily maltreated by the translation) give the seeming quiet before her storm: she is about to be tormented by remorse. The background and basis of the C major triad are not drab—or, if you like, drab in an intensely moving, pathetic way: simple, grey and sad, hopeless as far as the actual situation is concerned, yet resignedly hopeful for a harmony beyond. What this C major really expresses is how un-drab, how un-trite drabness can be. That Dr. Jacob has remained unmoved by the harmonies produced by the recitative as against the pedal triad is hardly understandable; that he has continued to misunderstand the passage even when he heard bars 8ff. of Ex. 1c suggests that he never listened. But his failure is Berg's achievement: the passage is so unexpected for him that he cannot switch his emotions round; yet, if he really acquainted himself with the music, he would soon realize that from the point of view of music and drama, as distinct from the standpoint of his and his fellow-minds' latent associations, you cannot expect anything else.³

This is really the answer to the question of Berg's original eclecticism: a derivative is used, with cogent logic in regard to the work's own premises, in a place where the traditional listening mind would, because of its ingrained associations, least expect it. Ex. 2 (quoted without harmonies for space reasons) gives another illustration of this process which must of course be assumed to have been quite unconscious; in fact, this example affords more than a hint of Berg's unconsciousness itself. Marie's "Eia popeia" (Exs. 2c (i) and (ii)) has again struck many by its original structure; its strangeness thrills. Now why is it so particularly strange? In the German, Austrian and Swiss mind the words "Eia popeia" inevitably and immediately call up a folksong (Ex. 2a) which every German-speaking child knows before he can sing (and which Engelbert Humperdinck, himself an editor of folksongs, has incorporated in the opera *Hänsel und Gretel*, whence it is known to the English-singing world). Berg, "instead" of giving the wrongly-expecting listening mind something in the nature of the "real 'Eia popeia'", surprises it by the multiply opposite: violently disjunct instead of consistently conjunct motion, marked contrast of *tempo* (further stressed by Berg's context) and rhythm, and so forth. The effect is stunning—or rather, on the contrary, enlightening; for the inherent beauty of the piece pierces the listener's mind far more thoroughly than if he had not been misprepared by the wrong associations of tradition's conditioning: he is torn away from, and cleansed of the platitudinous.

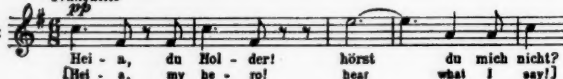
His expectations in this instance are of a different order from those which the events preceding Ex. 1c aroused in him. For one thing, they are here far more concrete; for another, they are retrospective, for by the time he hears the words "Eia popeia" it is

³ Incidentally, if Dr. Jacob were acquainted with *Wozzeck*, he would have another example of a double bassoon solo for his meagre list in his excellent booklet on *How to Read a Score*.

really too late to expect. Now if these retrospective expectations were entirely hopeful, the shock of Berg's music would still be exclusively painful (as indeed it is for some mediocre ears). But the musical listener not merely hopes lazily for a variation on the children's song, he also, indeed far more strongly, dreads it artistically. This retrospective fear results in a cathartic relief from the rubbish at the childish back of his mind, and he is free to receive Berg's beauty which in itself isn't half as original as it must now seem to him. For Berg's own mind, while reacting negatively to one word-sound (phonetic) association ("Eia popeia"), reacted positively to another which, extramusically, is quite unconnected with the emotional sphere of the lullaby: "Heia" is the word, and it is sung by Wellgunde to Alberich (Ex. 2b; the reader is asked to look up the entire

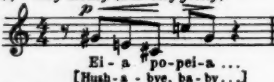
Ex. 2a**LOWER SAXON FOLKSONG***Lightly***Ex. 2b****RIHINGOLD, SCENE I***Tranquillo**pp*

WELLGUNDE

**Ex. 2c****WOZZECK, ACT I, SCENE 3, Lullaby.**(i) *Very slowly (and very freely)*

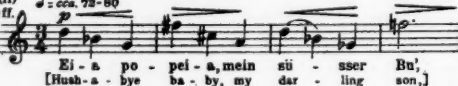
Bar 270

MARIE

(ii) *J = ca. 72-80*

Bars 280 ff.

MARIE



examples 2b and c). It is from this passage of Wagner's that he derived his own phrase, and since the primitive, free phonetic association is conceptually rather ridiculous though musically fruitful, while the association between the two "Eia popeias" is conceptually acceptable, indeed obvious, but musically boring, it may be assumed that Berg *consciously rejected the children's song and unconsciously accepted Wellgunde*. The listener, it will be noted, is doing more or less the same. In any case the derivation from Wagner is, in this context, so inventive and unexpected, and at the same time musically so convincing, that phrases more original than these eclectic ones cannot be imagined—unless someone writes them.

(2) *The development of and to the model: its psychology.*

The first-discussed, famous C major passage from *Wozzeck* (Ex. 1c) returns in the end to where it came from: to the string quartet (Exs. 1d and 1b respectively). As in the case of his "official" quotations (of which one is in fact to be found a few bars previously: the opening of *Tristan* in bars 26f.), Berg succeeds here in incorporating the passage, at a decisive formal juncture, in a consistently twelve-tonal context. He even returns to his Schönbergian model by giving the leading voice—the American term is here more appropriate than the English—to the second fiddle, and if the key has changed from C major to G major, this is in itself a "development of and to the model", for the Mahler (Ex. 1a; look up complete context) avails itself of both keys, with G major as basis.

We have by now assembled sufficient evidence for this curious tendency to attempt a psychological explanation. Before we embark thereon, however, we must rid our minds of all confusions between psychic guilt (including unconscious guilt feelings) and real (e.g. in musical analysis, artistic) guilt. A creator may feel deeply and unconsciously guilty of something which is really (consciously and artistically) entirely praiseworthy.

The sinner is wont to return to the place of his deed. His guilt feelings, his need for punishment, which indeed may have been responsible for the deed in the first place, drive him toward this ritual. At the same time, he thus affords himself an opportunity to repeat the crime on the phantasy level. Freud (*Jenseits des Lustprinzips*) has moreover shown the existence of an instinctual repetition-compulsion (*Wiederholungszwang*) which works beyond, and can indeed work against the pleasure-principle (in which case it assumes "demonic" character). It can be freely observed in children who repeatedly act out traumatic or unpleasant experiences (dentist) until they have overcome them.

I submit it is this complex of tendencies which lies at the root of the "development of and to the model". The creator of the model is a father substitute; its use assumes the ambivalent significance of every identification: idealisation on the one hand, aggression (incorporation, or, technically, "introjection") on the other. The father is being robbed: the deepest complexes, Oedipus and castration, are immediately activated. Guilt rises to a fair maximum, and the development of and to the model follows as a matter of unconscious and highly ambivalent course.

Berg himself must have had, under his mild social personality, a pretty savage superego which included not only his dependence on father figures but also his guilt about this very dependence as well as his guilt over being a member of the *avant-garde*, a position which involved the constant risk of betraying the father figures of tradition, though his most powerful father substitute, Schönberg, was himself sufficiently tradition-conscious to let Berg's creativeness flower to its extraordinary heights. Nevertheless, *Wozzeck's* obsessional preoccupation with traditional instrumental forms and styles would seem to testify to a lively conflict even *within* Berg's superego, i.e. between father Schönberg and the fathers of tradition. This conflict too, however, appears to have been entirely propitious.

One further compulsion would be explicable along these lines, i.e. what one might call Berg's quotation obsession which he shares with many other contemporary composers. It seems plausible that his intentional quotations spring from a twofold guilt: (a) his (artistically of course largely unjustified) uneasiness over his eclecticism, so that the "official" quotations, as a tribute to his fathers, extenuate or even deny the unofficial ones; (b) the hesitant revolutionary's heavy responsibility towards the past. As far as their purpose is concerned, the tendencies are identical: legalization and authorization of his creations. A future and, we dare predict, fascinating study will have to concern itself with the *exact musico-technical and emotional contexts wherein Berg's and other composers' "official" quotations occur.*

(3) *The future of "Wozzeck".*

For the present, we might end with a prognostication about the future fate of the opera itself. As soon, or as late as Schönberg's work is known and understood, *Wozzeck* and indeed the whole of Berg's output will undergo a period of painful and childish underestimation, as if it were Berg's fault that Schönberg was the greater and more original composer (a fact, incidentally, which Berg himself, with astoundingly objective insight, was the first to stress), as if Berg grew smaller through Schönberg's being greater. In the end, however, the eclecticism of *Wozzeck* will be revalued and the work will be recognized as the unique achievement it is. Meanwhile, for our old fogeys, *Wozzeck* is not too derivative, but too new in style and content to be welcomed even now, so that they promptly relegate it to the past, calling it a "period piece" in order to get round understanding it. Ironically enough, a "period piece" is about the only thing *Wozzeck* is not. That is to say, it never was contemporary, it never drew on the present, but only on the past and, through Schönberg, on the future.

H. K.

Film Music and Beyond

NOISY MUSIC AND MUSICAL NOISE

MUSIC has become noisier; the sound ideal* of our age is something of a noise ideal. The causes of this development are complex, but three basic and mighty factors would seem to stand out: (1) the development of art from beauty towards truth, (2) our culture's increasing reliance on sado-masochistic energies at the expense of more purely sexual energies, and (3) the tendency, at the end of a civilization, to revert to primeval beginnings and rejuvenate future developments. It will easily be seen how these factors are inter-related: the discovery of truth depends as much on sublimated aggression as the creation of beauty depends on sublimated *libido*, and reversion to the elemental is impossible without an urge towards discovery.

Significantly enough, we nowadays say of certain sounds, and not of noisy ones either, that they constitute "a nice noise", a description of music which would have been unimaginable in the nineteenth century and even to-day depends on the English tendency towards understatement: the German equivalent, for instance, "ein hübsches Geräusch" (let alone "ein netter Lärm"), would still be an impossibility.

The difference between noisy music and musical noise is one of historical stages: when the noisification of music has reached a maximal point, the musicalization of new noises becomes inevitable. Noise's Fifth Column among the musical instruments is of course the percussion group. It has increased its power by the usual political means, i.e. not only directly, but also by way of subtle influence upon the other instruments which it has made more percussive. The inevitability of its final victory may be said to date from the day when the violin, in a solo passage of a violin concerto, was mistaken for a percussion instrument by an unprejudiced ear.

The most radical direct measure of the Percussion Party has of course consisted in a lavish extension of its membership. George Antheil may have created a sensation with his twelve sewing-machines in the *Ballet Mécanique* (1925), but by now the ideas—see, for the earliest instance, Francesco Pratella's *Musica Futurista* (1912)—and practices—hear Luigi Russolo—of noise-music, of *futurismo* and *bruitisme*, create a tired smile on the face of every musical new-born. This reaction, however, is in itself a sign of defeat. The machine-music of a Stravinsky, a Bartók or even a Milhaud is more than just one of the innumerable diseases of the poor old 'twenties. Even purely percussive scores, such as Edgar Varèse's *Ionisation* or, more recently, Daniel Jones' Sonata for three kettledrums (published in *The Score* of June, 1950), continue to be written, and the "concrete music" of Pierre Henri and Pierre Schaeffer employs, beside a generous kitchen, nothing but technical noises, such as those of railways, brakes, and Morse signals.

These are extreme examples, but they are extreme examples of something. Even the (in every sense) strongest opponent of machine and *ostinato* noises, Arnold Schönberg, has made his own deep-reaching contribution to the musicalization of noise, e.g. by loosening the bonds of pitch (*Sprechgesang*) and indeed subordinating pitch to *timbre* (see pp. 470 f. of the *Harmonielehre* and hear the third of the *Fünf Orchesterstücke*).

In one or two press surveys of 1951's outstanding films, *White Corridors* (director Pat Jackson) has featured prominently, but it has not been noticed that its sound-track does not harbour any film music—background, foreground, "featured", "realistic", "title", "end-title"—whatsoever. Our own enthusiasm over the film's non-musicality is tempered only by the consideration that there would not possibly have been any place for music: a picture about life, love and death in a hospital is in any case and *a priori*

* This is an accepted technical term in America. It derives from the German "*Klangideal*".

bound to be partial *Kitsch*, because ethical problems have to be simplified and technical problems popularized to the extent of doctors and nurses telling each other with deep faces and in basic English things which each and all of them know anyway. Of such a film, a musical background would make immediate nonsense, for the essential problem in its creation is how to avoid, as far as possible, slipping from the realistic level: the chances of ascending to art are minimal, while the risk of descending to nowhere in particular is enormous. *Mutatis mutandis*, the same considerations hold true of any "feature documentary", particularly of one which dispenses technical information with a marked emotional aspect—a category into which fall all films on a specialized social group. Thus, *The Blue Lamp*, which "starred" the Metropolitan Police, was entirely music-less too. Hollywood, on the other hand, is nowadays capable of the impossible; where is the time when its excellent non-musical thriller *Scarface* set a revolutionary example? To-day, in *The Blue Lamp's* American sister film *The House on 92nd Street*, an often adult piece on the FBI, the sound track welcomes what, in his probable opinion, is the tense and moving score of Mr. David Buttolph. The music is distributed with the same originality which informs the composition itself. It is used, that is to say, for the purpose of sticking shots and sequences together, or else points out to you that you are now being thrilled.

White Corridors runs near that level of *Kitsch* than which less is hardly feasible; nor is it content with excluding the unnecessary and harmful from its track, but actually achieves some definite and well-defined poetic realism on the acoustic side *by dint of thematic, indeed almost musicalized noises*.

First of all, during the title credits, the sound track heightens our aural sensitivity by an admittedly somewhat mysterious selection of natural noise. At the end of the credits we hear the bell of the hospital chapel, which in its turn introduces the ticking of the clock in the porter's lodge: the time-bound, timeless, humanely ruthless atmosphere is set.

(We till shadowed days are done,
We must weep and sing
Duty's conscious wrong,
The Devil in the clock,
The Goodness carefully worn
For atonement or for luck;

....

W. H. Auden, "Fish in the Unruffled Lakes".)

So far, so easily good. But now the rhythm of the clock is taken over by the steps of the just-relieved porter as he leads us, along the white corridor, into the film by walking out of it. It is at this change in the "instrumentation" of the motto rhythm that poetic realism comes in; a quasi-artistic condensation of otherwise unchanged reality, and the focussing of our attention on a highly charged aspect of it (clock \gg steps), push us into the real behind reality: a first-rate, *i.e.* functional "instrumentation" of an ordered rhythmical noise which it would be difficult to distinguish, by definition, from music. And sure enough, the highest compliment one can pay this little device is that any verbal explanation of the interpretation and unification of reality which it offers would fall flat.

Schönberg once argued with Mahler about the possibility of writing a melody on a single note played successively by different instruments, and despite Mahler's decided and irritated "No!" he returned to his idea in both the above-mentioned works, *i.e.* in what was originally entitled *The Changing Chord* piece from Op. 16 (1909) and at the end of the *Harmonielehre* (1911), where he suggested that "pitch is nothing but *timbre* measured in one direction", that colour is the great realm of which pitch is but a province. The book ends thus:

Tone-colour melodies! How sharp the senses which here discriminate!
What a highly developed mind which may enjoy such subtleties!
Who dares here to demand theory!

Unwittingly, and of course still rather primitively, the present sound track applies this idea to a stylized dramatic noise-*ostinato*. What is more, the film not only ends with the

same motif, thus giving the feeling of a ternary structure, but even ventures a logically "modified recapitulation", consisting again in a change of instrumentation: this time the rhythm is "played" by the (doctor) heroine's steps which, after her life's longest night and happiest morning, lead her along the white corridor—not to bed, but on to her next case; they lead her back into her anti-temporal profession and us out of the film. That the effect of this changing unchanging *ostinato* is in every detail bound up with the visual aspect of the film is only as it should be: a good and in fact progressive piece of film "music". Musical noise, then, can be less noisy than noisy music, and it can no doubt be more musical.

H. K.

Concerts

HINDEMITH'S *MATHIS DER MALER*

BBC SYMPHONY CONCERTS, ROYAL ALBERT HALL, 30TH JANUARY

Roderick Jones, Raymond Nilsson, Elsie Morrison, Herbert Hainsworth, Howell Glynn, Frank Sale, David Lloyd, Sylvia Fisher, Denis Dowling, Janet Howe; the BBC Chorus; the BBC Symphony Orchestra, c. Clarence Raybould.

Moral . . . Es ist ein gutes Wort—Der Hauptmann to Wozzeck.

DER HAUPTMANN's remark to his batman might serve as a motto for most of London's important operatic events during the fairly recent past. They range from Vaughan Williams' *Pilgrim's Progress* to Stravinsky's *Rake's Progress* (a first Italian performance many of us vicariously shared by means of the Third Programme's relay). Both the Stravinsky and Vaughan Williams are "moralities" for all the rather amusing contradiction of their styles and titles. As a kind of mediating referee stands *Wozzeck*, a work which makes no moral judgment at all, but presents a case with the maximum of compassion and a minimum of preaching. Midway between the two extremes we have *Billy Budd* and the quandary of Captain Vere, and *Mathis der Maler* with the social conscience of the artist Grünewald. Perhaps to remind us that moral fervour isn't the only operatic stimulus, Covent Garden revived *Salome* at the end of its current season, an immoral work if there ever was one, not because of its subject, but because it wears its unsavouriness so lightly. *Salome* doesn't shock, isn't half shocking enough.

Hindemith's *Mathis*, odd though it may seem, has much in common with Vaughan Williams' *Pilgrim's Progress*. Both works, for very long stretches, are impressively boring. I am not attempting to score with a smart phrase. It is, as I feel it, the precise truth about Hindemith's first three scenes—apart that is from the orchestral prelude, the "Concert of Angels", which is already familiar as the first movement of the *Mathis* Symphony. But it is far from correct that the Symphony once heard, the best of the opera's music has been experienced. The *ensembles*, almost without exception, are extraordinarily beautiful, particularly the quartet in scene five (Albrecht, Ursula, Capito, Riedinger). Indeed these *ensembles* are sensuous oases of sound in an otherwise not arid, but rigorously ascetic score. Hindemith's vocal writing is angular in the extreme and accompanied by the barest of orchestral textures. Bony is a highly relevant adjective. One would not complain of the bones were they not so monotonous; as monotonous a diet as Hindemith's rhythms. Delius was not the only composer who lost himself in vast wastes of triple time.

How far *Mathis* succeeds dramatically is hard to tell from a concert performance; in any case, the BBC omitted the fourth scene which contains most of the scenically dramatic action—for that very reason, one imagines. This year's production of *Mathis* at Edinburgh should provide the answer. Frankly my heart shrinks a little when I read in an opera synopsis "On one side of the stage are Papists with Pommersfelden, Lutherans

with Capito on the other. The opposing groups assail one another first with mocking songs and eventually . . ." etc. I am never convinced that these clerical squabbles come off musically or dramatically. But Pfitzner, we are told, succeeds in *Palestrina* (I shouldn't be at all surprised if *Mathis* didn't owe quite a lot to Pfitzner's example) and perhaps on the stage Hindemith's quarrelling choruses will sound less like the driest of Board meetings. Undeniably effective, even in the Albert Hall, was the scene of St. Anthony's Temptation, wherein appears much of the remainder of the Symphony's music—and, as it were, in a new light, especially for those who come to the opera *via* the Symphony. For instance, I was astonished to find what I had taken in the Symphony to be one of St. Anthony's serenest and holiest thoughts, in the opera partners Ursula's appearance "as a courtesan of seductive beauty". I had been taking the Flesh for the Spirit.

The performance (particularly orchestrally speaking) was lethargic but left a residual impression of nobility and integrity. Amongst the soloists Sylvia Fisher distinguished herself as Ursula—she had all the best and formally free-est soloistic music, and she made the most of it. D. M.

ILSA STEINOVA WITH GERALD MOORE

WIGMORE HALL, 22ND MARCH

ILSA STEINOVA, a Czech-born, Prague-bred mezzo-soprano, submitted an unconventional programme in her Wigmore Hall *début*, consisting of music from the different cultures she has assimilated—Prague meaning, of course, a little Czech, and a good deal of Austro-German in general and of Austro-Jewish in particular.

In Beethoven's *Busslied* she was, as yet, nervous, but *Wonne der Wehmut*, though still over-accented, already betrayed a real voice, a thoroughly realizing technique, an ingrained culture and music at the bottom of it all. *Neue Liebe, neues Leben* was yet better, and her re-introducing the *tempo* (after the recitativo retardation) in advance of its actual rhythmic definition *by means of timbre and dynamics alone* showed that indispensable, natural sense of phrasing which, since too many people have received musical education, one encounters more often in Lyons Corner Houses than in the studios of the Third Programme. Gluck's *Divinités du Styx* proved her *vibrato* to be a means of varying expression rather than the usual constant mechanical interference, and in Brahms' *Therese, Von ewiger Liebe*, and *Meine Liebe ist grün*, especially in the latter, the big line or curve, "die grosse Linie", asserted itself in no uncertain terms. Mahler's *Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen* surprised in some of their *tempi*: one gathers that Miss Steinova studied them with Hans Nachod (Schönberg's tenor-cousin and the "creator" of Waldemar's part in the *Gurrelieder*) who should certainly have known better. The first song began too slowly and became slower, with Gerald Moore's exaggerating, on the other hand, the quicker initial bars and their resumptions *ad absurdum*, investing them moreover with a smart air which they entirely lack. "Ging heut' morgens über's Feld" was far more enjoyable, if not in sufficiently high spirits: too much of a good girl and not enough of an unburdened boy. The *molto ritenuto* being again exaggerated, one wondered whether the singer would be able to manage the extremely slow speed which was now required for "Nun fängt auch mein Glück wohl an?", but she was; the ensuing end, then, took the form of a slow-motion picture of the correct phrasing and expression. A sovereign, though not quite sufficiently wild interpretation of "Ich hab' ein glühend Messer" was disturbed only by, again, an over-retardation at "Wenn ich in den Himmel seh'": a common fault, this, for in view of Mahler's *nicht eilen* and *ritenuto* and *molto ritardando* and, finally, *più lento ancora*, the performer is liable to forget that part of the slowing-down process is already achieved by the harmonic texture. The last song was not sentimental: a rare achievement.

After the interval, Smetana's *Večerní písně* (five "Evening" songs) as well as folkloristic songs by Villa-Lobos and another talented Brazilian, Camargo Guarnieri (born 1907), gave an idea of the singer's versatility, and her *vibrato*-less boy's voice in the latter composer's *Lembranças do Dosango Cáqui* suggested great possibilities of tone-modulation for more serious purposes. The recital finished with the "Lied der Waldbaube" from the

Gurrelieder, whose perceptive rendering would have delighted Schönberg despite a certain lack of movement and excitement in places which thus ran the risk of isolation—not at the end, though, which was built up magnificently.

The audience's reception was warm, as should be that of the profession: we can ill afford to neglect someone who can sing.

H. K.

KARL RANKL'S FIRST SYMPHONY

Rankl's three-movement but full-length first Symphony, composed in 1934, was given its first performance in England, with the composer conducting, at the Liverpool Philharmonic Concert on 29th January. Scored for a large orchestra, with ample percussion, it harks back to the Vienna of pre-atonal days and is pervaded with the spirit of Mahler in its conception as a symphony with voices, its deliberate orchestral virtuosity, its actual treatment of the orchestra and the cut of its themes. The writing is assured, in the manner of conductor's music, but beefier than Mahler's, with a far less imaginative use of its multiplicity of themes. Schönberg's influence is perhaps responsible for the use of striding sevenths and ninths, but this Symphony is firmly rooted in minor modality, with B as its main centre, and the Schönbergian intervals create tonal clashes but do not undermine the prevalent tonality.

The three voices, two sopranos and an alto, are employed only in the central section of the ternary slow movement. The settings are of a traditional folk-poem in the style of a chorale, and of two poems by the eighteenth-century Matthias Claudius, the first as a soprano solo, the other as a trio. Their theme is the transience of life, and they give a programmatic basis to the motto theme—an angular B-F-C-E flat—with which the Symphony opens and which provides the roots of most of the material. Only in this movement is there any clearly extended melodic writing, and the motto's angularities only occur to underline a salient phrase in the text. The first movement, a definite sonata-form, is fiercely argued and generates quantities of material that is abruptly dismissed, though the first and second groups, apart from the dominating motto, are melodically indeterminate and have too little rhythmic variety. The third movement is perhaps deliberately picturesque: it throws out suggestions of *ländler* rhythms and twice bursts into a waltz that is swept away by the triumph of the motto, underlining the symbolism which the composer has already made abundantly clear. Throughout, the parts, particularly the use of the orchestra, are more interesting than the whole; Doctor Rankl's external and literary ideas, it seems, have had the major influence in determining the course of the work; there is the continual suggestion of an important statement shortly to be made, but the Symphony ends before it arrives.

The composer showed every sign of satisfaction with the orchestra and his singers—Ena Mitchell, Anne Wood and Patricia Howard; the playing throughout was good, leaving us with the disappointing feeling that further performances will have nothing new to offer.

H. R.

The Ballet in Germany: Some Recent Developments

BY

EVERETT HELM

GERMANY is not a country with a great ballet tradition, nor a country where ballet has been avidly cultivated. Recently, however, there have been indications of growing interest in the development of good indigenous ballet, and although these indications are spasmodic and local in nature, they may well point in the direction in which the wind is blowing.

There is, for example, the great success of Werner Egk's *Abraxas*, which last season received over fifty performances in the Berlin Städtische Oper and subsequently, with another company, toured the provinces. It is true that this success was not a purely artistic one. Despite Egk's protestations that all is on a high intellectual and philosophical plane, he appears to be the only one to hold this opinion; his audiences, from the *intelligentsia* to John von Doe, find that sex not only rears its ugly head but quite dominates the scene. A certain government leader of Bavaria, Herr Hundhammer, was also strongly of this opinion and banned the work in Munich, thus rendering Egk and *Abraxas* a distinct favour and getting the work off to a fine start in Berlin. *Abraxas* is not only sex, mind you. It is also art—a danced version of the Faust legend. And as art, as well as sex, it was very well danced by the ballet *ensemble* of the Städtische Oper, after the choreography had been fixed by Janine Charrat of Paris, who also danced the first few performances with phenomenal success. *Abraxas* is still running in the Städtische Oper, as are excellent performances of Wolfgang Fortner's *The White Rose* and Boris Blacher's *Lysistrata*.

Of greater interest, however, is the recent serious attempt of the Hessian State Opera in Wiesbaden to establish a ballet of real stature. To this end a number of outstanding dancers, including Peter and Eva-Inge van Dijk and Maria Fries, have been engaged and are now in their first season. The entire project is being supervised by Hans Werner Henze, a young German composer of the twelve-tone persuasion, whose works are frequently heard in concerts of "advanced" music. The first fruits of the new venture were given a showing recently in a ballet evening comprising three works: Schönberg's *Pelléas and Mélisande*, Ghiseler Klebe's *Pas de Trois*, and Henze's *Invocation of Apollo*. The programme is most ambitious, all three works are difficult to perform, and one has the feeling that the *ensemble* "jumped the gun"—that they would have done better to wait until the new troupe was better trained and better broken in. Klebe's piece was the most successful from the standpoint of dancing, employing, as it does, only soloists. The score itself is witty and interesting, incorporating jazz elements and possessing great rhythmic vitality. Klebe, a young Berlin composer of unusual talent, displays in this work a strong musicality, despite his obvious indebtedness to Stravinsky; economy of means and directness of the musical language are qualities that he cultivates and that are all too often missing in German music. Henze's work had already been performed in concert form under the title of third Symphony and had made a weak impression as symphonic music. It is scarcely more successful as ballet. Written in a modified twelve-tone idiom with echoes of Stravinsky, it lacks strength and imagination and is weak in construction, moving for the most part aimlessly and without clear purpose and direction. In spite of certain imperfections and lack of maturity, however, this ballet evening set a high artistic goal and can be criticized on a correspondingly high artistic level. Still better performances may be expected in the future.

The best ballet in Western Germany, however, is to be seen in Munich, where the Bavarian State Opera has made a special point of developing its ballet *ensemble* during the post-war years. The recent performance of Prokofiev's *Cinderella* emphasized again the degree of perfection this *ensemble* has achieved. A large share of the credit for this

splendid performance goes to the prima ballerina Irène Skorik, whose portrayal of Cinderella was as sympathetic as her skill and talent in the dance are great; she carried the piece from beginning to end, with able support from Franz Baur, Natascha Trofimova and Heino Hallhuber. The choreography of Victor Gsovsky was sensitive and imaginative.

How great a step forward such performances mean for German ballet was made more than clear by an evening spent recently in Stuttgart. Stuttgart has an excellent opera—one of the best, indeed—a splendid symphony orchestra and excellent theatre. It is not unfair therefore to appraise its ballet by the same standards as one would apply to its opera and theatre. If one makes such a comparison, there is only one word to describe the ballet: bad. The evening in question consisted of Hindemith's *Nobilissima Visione* and Stravinsky's *Petrouchka*. From beginning to end the dancers were beyond their depth; that which was meant to be expressive was mainly embarrassing, that which should have been witty was ludicrous. The dancers appeared not to have the technique, and the choreography was grotesquely inadequate. Such performances of ballet are more the rule than the exception in the majority of German opera houses, and there are numerous indications that both public and management know it and are anxious to remedy the situation. The press had a good deal to say on the subject, and a good many odious comparisons to make, when the American Ballet toured the country with enormous success. This, Germans said and wrote, was a standard of ballet worth aiming at. And practically every performance of visiting French ballet companies is sold out.

All of these straws in the wind may point towards a renaissance of the ballet in Germany.

Covent Garden

TWO NEW BALLETS

A Mirror for Witches, 4th March

Bonne-Bouche, 4th April

These two latest works for the Sadler's Wells Company are on original themes—so far as neither uses an already familiar ballet plot—and both give opportunities to two choreographers needing experience of big-scale companies and full-sized theatres. Music was commissioned for each one and both works shared the distinction of absence of star rôles; in other words, their creators were either bidden or chose to cast all their characters from the hierarchy of Covent Garden below the ranks of ballerina and *premier danseur*. Both ballets, on several showings, can stand continuous presentation by the original casts and neither seems in need of that extra *panache* that is provided when the leading rôle is handed to a top-flight ballerina.

A Mirror for Witches by Andrée Howard uses a plot based on a novel about witchcraft, its score is by Dennis ApIvor and costumes and sets were the work of Miss Howard and a new designer, Norman Adams. It lasts for 48 minutes and its incontestible defect is that, in the last analysis, its subject is not fully amenable to dance treatment; the work needs its programme analysis (defining characters, their inter-relationships, places of action, etc.) to become understandable to the spectator. An American sea captain witnesses a witch-burning in seventeenth-century Brittany, he rescues a child abandoned by one of the victims and takes it home to New England; we see the child, now in her teens, and her impact on her foster-parents, her fiancé, friends and village neighbours. She brings evil with her, is in association with hellish beings and is finally accused of witchcraft; the case is proved against her and, cast into prison, she dies there after a visit from the Evil One.

Given that one has noted the title and is prepared to expect a series of stage pictures of whatever witches do, the story is meaningless without close reading

of the programme synopsis; therefore the work surrenders one of the primary conditions for ballet-making. A ballet on a story basis must be so created that its dance-action both tells the story and permits the dancers to develop whatever characters they portray. The trick—there is no derogation in using the word to define an aspect of craftsmanship—is to plan the action in advance, tie that action into a framework of musical expression and *insist* that the composer takes his due place as an assistant to the creator. Without analysing fifty-odd ballets of the past fifty years we may say that a ballet score occupying 48 minutes to accompany a ballet of this nature is a big technical error. Minutes in ballets are golden items; the choreographer who plans his ballets re-arranges the story in his mind over and over again seeking to eliminate every phase of unnecessary movement, every superfluous passage of gesture and mime.

If a novel can be successfully used as basis for a theatre dance spectacle (whose essence must be a *concentration* of the novel's plot and characterization) then it surely needs to be compressed into a stylized mode of dance-action which, in its own right, shows us organic shape, variations of rhythms, and an emotional rise-and-fall comparable to those which identify any other sound piece of theatre-craft—a well-knit opera, a blank-verse drama, a realistic play, a drama of atmospheres.

John Cranko, who made *Bonne-Bouche* on a score by Arthur Oldham and in sets and costumes by Osbert Lancaster, uses an original idea completely balletic by nature. He aims high—the genre is satirization of social conventions amongst the *haute bourgeoisie* of S.W.7—achieves a certain measure of success, and misses creating a first-rate comedy ballet by faltering in inventiveness; his imaginings far outrun his ability as a creator of significant movements. Here again the total length betrays the fact that basic planning was not carried out thoroughly; the work is 40 minutes long and its climax occurs six minutes before the end. This last six minutes is so obviously a filling-in process that one is again aware (as in *A Mirror for Witches*) that at some point the co-ordination between choreographer and composer has slipped out of gear.

The period is vaguely "about" the time of the 1914-18 war (the costumes mostly hit off 1920, 21 and 22—but some belong to the years 1912 to 1914) and in a Kensington square we meet a pushful Mamma and her silly, romantic daughter. Various suitors offer themselves, the girl finds each in turn acceptable but Mamma has some good reason for rejecting one after another. A party of street-corner evangelists, The League of Light, hold a prayer meeting and the more presentable of the suitors goes off with them to Africa—missionizing being as good a cathartic as the slaying of big game. In the jungle the party is decimated by sundry animals and natives; the hero dreams of, and discovers gold; he returns to Kensington a wealthy man. But in the interim an African King has visited his Legation in Kensington; he too falls for the daughter, but when he lures her away from Mamma it is not to initiate her into strange marriage rites, but to cook and eat her. . . . The suitor arrives in time to discover the cooking-pot still steaming from its succulent contents. (This is the climax point, and the ensuing part of the ballet is filled with remarkably aimless running about and falling over while the inhabitants unsuccessfully chase the dusky monarch.)

Both works can be seen as unusual in that their choreographers have been given ample facilities and the biggest organization in existence to mount ballets of a size they have not tackled before. By what are still recognizable as artistic standards of ballet-creation, neither of them has created much that is significant; the first is as well-knit as its story and score allow, but Miss Howard shows almost no interesting step-combinations or meaningful gestures that she hasn't revealed in her earlier works for Ballet Rambert, Metropolitan Ballet and the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet. Mr. Cranko's work comes just when something light-hearted is desirable from all points of view, so it is guaranteed a certain run of success.

Both efforts offer chances to many small-part dancers—yet little of the dancing is memorable—both choreographers having relied on a technical structure emphasizing mime more than dancing. There is no unkindness in saying that both of them are haggard by the convention of the "pointe" and the female dancers' movement arrangements

are to a large extent dominated by a technical usage which is, nine times out of ten, meaningless, limiting to dance-expression, and visually unaesthetic. (It may be ten or twenty years yet before the creative personnel of twentieth-century ballet perceive that the use of "pointes" is justifiable *only* for certain limited character-situations or to produce a carefully-planned aesthetic effect at a given moment in the action. Modern choreographers seem to plan every ballet on the assumption that female dancers can only move around when jacked-up on the tips of their toes.)

Both scores are competent to a fault, in harmony with their themes, rather lushly orchestrated, and just too long to achieve artistic balance as parts of a creative process involving dance-arrangement, costumes, staging and production, musical accompaniment and the presentation of an idea in movement.

A. V. C.

Book Reviews

Hugo Wolf. By Frank Walker. Pp. x + 502. (Dent.) 1951. 36s.

In place of a preface the author writes a chapter of "Acknowledgments" in which he describes his work as an "attempt at a source-book in English on an Austrian composer". Any reader will soon realize that this description is too modest. There can be no doubt that as far as Wolf's life story is concerned finality has been reached, allowing even for Mr. Walker's statement that "one important chapter and a few shorter passages have had to be omitted from this edition, out of regard for the feelings of living people". Previous research work has been taken as a basis (in what way will be discussed presently) and some remarkable new facts have been brought to our knowledge. Mr. Walker has had a voluminous correspondence with relatives and friends of the composer, and with their descendants; he has scrutinized Wolf's musical manuscripts, sketches and letters; he has visited the places where the absorbing drama of Wolf's life took its course. The list of "Acknowledgments" names scores of persons, libraries, institutes and publishing houses in whose debt the author feels himself to be.

When making use of these sources Mr. Walker does not always quote in detail where an item of information comes from. He obviously dislikes footnotes of that nature and his main concern is a narration that shall be fluent and interrupted only by important quotations from letters and by contributions from friends and relatives "written for this book". As far as his own research work goes Mr. Walker is no doubt fully entitled to make use of it in whatever way he thinks fit. This position, however, changes completely when it comes to using the results of previous research. If that is done, quotation of the source becomes a law that cannot be disregarded by any writer who wants to be taken seriously. It would not have diminished the great merits of Mr. Walker's book by one iota if he had respected this law.

Before the publication of this book our knowledge of Hugo Wolf's life rested mainly on the biography by Ernst Decsey.¹ In four volumes, comprising well over 600 pages, this standard work gives the full story of Wolf's life and an exhaustive analysis of his compositions. Decsey, by profession a journalist, was a well-trained musician (counting, amongst others, Anton Bruckner as his teacher), and being a devoted admirer of Wolf, he left hardly a stone unturned to get all the information available at the time. He had the great advantage that almost all Wolf's friends were then still alive. While engaged upon the biography he lived for some years at Graz, the town where one of Wolf's closest friends Dr. Potpeschnigg was domiciled. In his preface to Vol IV, Decsey quotes him as the main source for the story of Wolf's illness and death.

¹ Ernst Decsey: *Hugo Wolf*. Vol. I, *Hugo Wolfs Leben, 1860-1887*; Vol. II, *Hugo Wolfs Schaffen, 1888-1890*; Vol. III, *Der Künstler und die Welt, 1892-1895*; Vol. IV, *Höhe und Ende, 1896-1903* (Leipzig und Berlin: Schuster & Löffler, 1903-1906).

How has Mr. Walker dealt with this fundamental work? The "Acknowledgments" make no mention of the name of Decsey and the name of his publishers, Schuster & Löffler, a firm of the highest reputation, does not appear at all in Mr. Walker's book, although he should have obtained their permission for what he has done. In the text of the book the name of Decsey appears very casually, mainly for the purpose of correcting minor details. Only readers who are sufficiently interested to turn to "Appendix I", the bibliography, will—at last on p. 450!—find a remark that Decsey's work carries "weight and authority". But even these three appreciative words are not attached to Decsey's work in four volumes; they will be found inserted in a critical remark on another Wolf book by Decsey which has nothing to do with the main work.

Mr. Walker would be entitled to all this on one condition only: if he had not otherwise made use of Decsey's work as a very substantial source for his own book, right up to literal translation. But he has done that. It would take a lot more space than the Editor has generously allocated to this article if all the relevant passages from both Decsey's and Walker's books were quoted. Besides, this reviewer has no wish to go hunting for that kind of thing. One short example only may demonstrate the facts. The passage quoted is Decsey's description of Potpeschnigg's visit to the mental home where Wolf was looked after until he died. Nobody who has ever read it (as this reviewer did more than 40 years ago) will be able to forget it; not even Strindberg has written anything more frightening and exciting: the creator of *Anakreons Grab* kept in a cage-like bed like a dangerous animal. Only the first sentences are quoted, but Decsey's text and Walker's translation, printed without one word of acknowledgment to either author or publisher, go on for quite a while in both books:

Decsey; 1906, Vol. IV, pp. 84–85

"Es dürfte zu Weihnachten 1899 gewesen sein, als Potpeschnigg ihn besuchte, um nach seinem Zustande zu sehen. Wolf hatte gerade einen schlechten Tag, er war 'bö's' und musste im Gitterbett, das in einer Ecke stand, wie in einem Käfig gehalten werden. Doch erkannte er schon die Stimme des Freundes von weitem, als dieser noch im ersten Zimmer war. Als Potpeschnigg eintrat, faltete Wolf die Hände und bat: 'Potpeschnigg, ich bitt' dich, schneid' mich heraus, schneid' mich heraus'. Auf Potpeschniggs Bitte öffneten die Wärter—sie sahen sich zuerst fragend an—eine Seite, und einer sagte: 'Wenn Sie brav sind, Herr Wolf, dürfen Sie heraus'. Da griff Wolf eilig mit der einen Hand heraus und drehte blitzschnell die Schraubenmutter auf, so dass die vordere Wand herunterfiel. Mit einem Satz sprang er heraus, umarmte und küsste Potpeschnigg, lief sofort zum Tisch, wo er sich aus einer Flasche ein Glas Wein einschenkte, das er hinunterstürzte. Diesen Augenblick benutzte der Wärter, legte ihm von rückwärts den Arm um die Seiten und trug ihn wie ein kleines Kind aufs Bett."

Walker; 1951, p. 442

"At about Christmas, 1899, Potpeschnigg came from Graz to see him. Wolf had been behaving badly and was confined in a sort of railed bed, like a cage, that stood in one corner of the room. He recognized the visitor's voice at once and as he entered pleaded from behind the bars: 'Please, Potpeschnigg, let me out, let me out!' At Potpeschnigg's request the attendants, rather doubtfully, opened one side, and one of them said: 'If you are going to behave, Herr Wolf, you may come out'. Wolf, like lightning, put his hands outside the rails and turned the screw so that the other side of the contraption fell away, then he leaped out, embraced and kissed his friend, broke away, ran to the table, poured himself out a glass of wine and quickly gulped it down. While he was thus occupied the attendant took the opportunity to approach from behind and then put his arms round the patient and carried him like a little child to his bed."

Bilingual readers will observe how excellent the translation is, and this is the case with all the translations throughout the book. That applies in particular to Wolf's quoted

letters although they offer an intricate problem to the translator. Wolf liked using certain homely expressions, especially in letters written to his Austrian relatives and friends, and the idiom of Austrian-German is different from that of literary German (*Schriftddeutsch*). Mr. Walker shows a happy gift in overcoming this difficulty; certain untranslatable words are quoted in the original and then "got round" in English with remarkable skill.

Perhaps the greatest merit of Mr. Walker's book is the courage with which he deals with Wolf's tragic disease. Apart from medical publications this is the first time that an author risks a clear hint that Wolf contracted syphilis very early in life. Mr. Walker puts it on record (p. 76) that in the opinion of Dr. Breuer the young student "acting on medical advice deliberately avoided using common table utensils, for fear of infecting others" (in 1878). The knowledge that Wolf was a sick man for the greater part of his life can only deepen our personal sympathy for him. Why bring out all sorts of other excuses for an almost unbroken story of violent outbreaks, abruptly terminated friendships, odd scenes at social gatherings, on concert platforms and during rehearsals all over Austria and Germany, when we have every right to assume that there was one tragic physiological reason for all this? Mr. Walker quotes (p. 179) from one of Wolf's letters to his brother-in-law Strasser: "Pity me, for now I know with certainty that it is my fate to wound all those who love me and whom I love. . . . I have gained thereby the conviction that my mental constitution is a thoroughly morbid one and will remain so" (1886).

Coming from a man of 26, that sounds as if the end was near, but fortunately we know that his genius won the race with an inevitable fate many a time before night fell upon his mind. And we also know of his conviction that victory, in the sense of fulfilment of his artistic mission on this earth, would be his. When his Berlin friend Paul Müller once blamed nature for its "ruthlessness" as proved by Schubert's early death, Wolf's most significant answer was: "Such a man is not called away before he has said what he has to say".² Surely Wolf must have felt that to be true for himself; and two years after he wrote the letter to Strasser the miracle happened. The years from 1888 to 1892 saw that unending stream of songs which have made his place in history secure. The manner in which Mr. Walker describes this happy time in Wolf's life and how he brings all these songs very near to his readers, with a minimum of music examples, deserve high praise indeed.

There is a world of difference between Wolf as a composer of songs and Wolf as a composer of instrumental works or, for instance, the commissioned incidental music to Ibsen's *The Feast at Solhaug* (although this latter was written just in the middle of these happy years). Although in composing a song he could be in high spirits and "expect an explosion every minute",³ the labour of composing incidental music could drive him into utter depression. In a letter to his Mannheim friend Grohe of 12th June, 1891, we read this: "It's all over with me as a composer. I believe I shall never write another note. So stupid and dried-up I have never found myself before in all my life. I thoroughly despise myself". (Mr. Walker's translation, p. 289.) In this reviewer's opinion it is to be regretted that Mr. Walker does not draw the dividing line between Wolf's songs and his other compositions more sharply. The composer himself drew it clearly enough, and in particular he was fully aware of the meaning of that great year 1888, the year of the Mörike, Eichendorff and Goethe songs. He was inclined to disregard almost anything written earlier. When, in 1893, Dr. Potpeschnigg asked him for some autobiographical dates, Wolf told him that the time of his "real creative work" ("meine *eigentliche Schaffenszeit*") should be dated from 1888.⁴ The simple truth is that Wolf could never

² Paul Müller: "Erinnerungen an Hugo Wolf". *Die Musik*, Berlin, 1903, April, Schuster & Löffler.

³ In a letter to Schur of 24th September, 1890. G. Schur: *Erinnerungen an Hugo Wolf*. Regensburg, 1922. Gustav Bosse Verlag, p. 60.

⁴ *Hugo Wolf. Briefe an Heinrich Potpeschnigg*. Stuttgart, 1923. Union Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft, p. 49.

get down to any thorough training in the sense of all-round musical craftsmanship. The songs came to him as an inspiration from some higher power and he was happy in their creation. But the picture changes completely when it comes to other categories of his life's work.

Writing to his father about the early string Quartet he said that he had given it up "because it did not seem to be good enough to complete"; Mr. Walker finds that it shows "many signs of a close study of the quartets and sonatas of Beethoven's last period" (p. 106). Poor Rosé quartet! They refused to play the work when it was offered to them. When the faithful Grohe hoped to obtain a performance of the symphonic poem *Penthesilea* at Mannheim, Wolf almost shouted at him:⁵ "I can only repeat what I told you in Matzen: that I don't consider the music up to standard, and that for that reason I do not think a performance of it desirable. I should be raging against my own flesh and blood by consenting to a performance of the piece in question, and you cannot expect me to do that". How, in the face of these unmistakable words by the composer, Mr. Walker can say (p. 187) that in *Penthesilea* "we possess one of the grandest romantic conceptions of the nineteenth century" is difficult to understand. Equally difficult is it to see why he goes on blaming the artists (Hellmesberger, Löwe and Kähler) who tried to carry out Wolf's own intention of "a complete overhaul of the scoring" (p. 190) after his death. Of the instrumental works which should continue to be performed, we are left with nothing more than the completed first movement of the *Italian Serenade* in its versions for string quartet and small orchestra, both published posthumously.

No work of Wolf's shows more clearly the different moods of the vocal and the instrumental composer than his only completed opera, *Der Corregidor*. "How I envy all those men who have no need to write operas. Ah, that was a fine time when I still composed songs! Then everything went swimmingly. But now I must sit and sweat" (Mr. Walker's translation, p. 365). So Wolf wrote when he had to orchestrate the work of which he had finished the vocal score in about fourteen weeks. And when it came to the first performance at Mannheim, "he showed himself so hopelessly ill-equipped to control the orchestral rehearsals that some of the players formed the opinion that he could not be the composer of the work at all, or at least, had got someone else to orchestrate it for him" (p. 380).⁶ Still, in this reviewer's opinion the final result was something of rather higher value than becomes apparent in Mr. Walker's judgment. Having seen a good many performances under first-rate conductors, with splendid casts and producers of imagination, this reviewer believes that the work is perfectly capable of making an audience very happy indeed.

One chapter of Mr. Walker's book is given to the thorny question of Hugo Wolf the "critic". These criticisms of Wolf's from the *Wiener Salonblatt*, here for the first time translated into English on a plentiful scale, are certainly not the kind of thing that can rouse enthusiasm to-day. What Wolf himself thought of them is reported by Mr. Walker (pp. 161/162). When one of his friends "once suggested that these writings should be collected and republished" he aroused a storm like that which fell upon Grohe when he wanted to perform *Penthesilea*. "No, no, no!", Wolf cried. "Never! Don't talk about it. May God grant that these articles be soon entirely forgotten, as they richly deserve! There is nothing that could harm me more than that somebody should unearth them and print them again." Mr. Walker makes the very interesting remark that Wolf referred here only to the literary imperfections of his writings, unfortunately without giving his source for such a statement. This reviewer cannot find any serious literary imperfections in Wolf's articles, at any rate not in the original German; but there are plenty of

⁵ Letter to Grohe of 24th September, 1894. This reviewer's translation, quoted from the article "Hugo Wolf's posthumous Works", in *THE MUSIC REVIEW*, Vol. II, Number 3, p. 203. This article dealt with the problems which Wolf's posthumous works offer to performer or publisher.

⁶ This quotation is Mr. Walker's translation of a communication given by Grohe to Decsey, which is properly quoted in Vol. IV, p. 36 of Decsey's work, but which Mr. Walker puts into his book as his own writing.

utterances which Wolf had every reason to feel ashamed of. However, as Mr. Walker aimed at a complete source-book he could not possibly leave this chapter outside the scope of his work and everything would be in the best of order if he had refrained from making comments which drag Schumann into the discussion, and in a way that asks for an answer. He quite seriously compares Wolf's outbreaks in the *Wiener Salonblatt*, that cradle for all sorts of cheap gossip in all spheres of life, with Schumann's exemplary *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* and his writings therein which are recognized as a model by all who take music criticism seriously. He says Schumann "gave generous praise not only to Chopin and Brahms, but to dozens of mediocrities who have never been heard of since". The truth is that Schumann, in a journal written for musicians, naturally tried to help young talents, to discuss everything with the clear aim of encouraging new composers, but by no means spoiling them with unjustifiable praise. Wolf on the other hand wrote his reviews while he was wrapped up to his ears (in the literary sense of the word) in the musical party warfare that was raging in Vienna and which really ought to be forgotten by now. Wolf's days at the *Salonblatt* would quickly have come to an end if he had attempted to write on new talents as Schumann did. The readers of the *Salonblatt* would not have cared a fig! Mr. Walker is altogether rather critical about Schumann whom Wolf admired so deeply. On p. 47 he says "All too many of his intended simplicities sound forced and unnatural". Where are Schumann's intended simplicities which sound forced and unnatural?

"No progress" must be reported as far as Mr. Walker's treatment of that sad chapter "Wolf and Brahms" is concerned. Isn't it about time that a Wolf biographer made a serious effort to give us a new outlook on the relations of Wolf's art to that of Brahms instead of repeating all these irritating stories, with evident relish for the way Wolf hated his great predecessor and contemporary? Must we really read again that Wolf wrote to Humperdinck (on getting stuck with his own *Solhaug* incidental music) that "he had almost decided to borrow some ideas from Brahms on Loge's principle: Steal from the thief what the thief stole"; that Brahms had "the melancholy of impotence"; that Wolf wrote to somebody: "If you have left any residue of sympathy for Brahms, then you are not ripe for my music"; that Wolf took a bow in a concert "to annoy Brahms, who sat opposite"; that "he raved a good deal about Brahms even after the gates of the mental home had closed behind him"? Is not all of this insane? Half a century has now passed since Wolf followed Brahms into eternity. Their names have appeared peacefully together on thousands of concert programmes in all parts of the world. They both lived in Austria, both subject to the same influences of climate, landscape, population and culture. Are we really to believe that there will never be a Wolf biographer who feels independent enough to tackle the problem of Brahms and Wolf from a higher standard?

A. A.

The Rise of English Opera. By Eric Walter White. Pp. 335. (Lehmann.) 1951. 21s.

Some Composers of Opera. By Dyneley Hussey. Pp. 102. (Oxford University Press.) 1952. 7s. 6d.

Gilbert and Sullivan. By Arthur Jacobs. Pp. 64. (Parrish.) 1951. 7s. 6d.

Eric Walter White's book is, in its way, a work of scholarship. His well written sketch of the history of English Opera and the voluminous appendices, in which every opera worth its composer's mention written by an Englishman or first produced in England is listed, and in part described, would together have made a valuable monograph. Between these essays appear chapters on housing, staging, financing and reviving of opera for native consumption against the background of our history and our indifference, which latter the author has not sufficiently appreciated. As to the *rise* of English opera, it is difficult to detect Mr. White's precise thesis. After the blank days of the war, Sadler's Wells and Covent Garden are again going concerns, Glyndebourne has again staged successful festivals and there exists the English Opera Group. *Peter Grimes*,

The Rape of Lucrece, *Albert Herring*, *Billy Budd*, *The Olympians* and *Pilgrim's Progress* have all been written and staged in recent years. These are the things we have risen to and though we are with Mr. White in agreeing that they represent signs of life, we cannot take flight with him and the title of his book. We agree more nearly with the substance of Benjamin Britten's Introduction to it. He writes:—

"Writing operas is a very tricky business; only a great gift coupled with hard-won experience can produce enduring masterpieces. To-day few composers can acquire the experience, even granted they have the gift. Therefore, let the managements and the public (not to mention the Press) be a little lenient about their early efforts. . . . After all, Mozart had to start with *Apollo and Hyacinth* and Verdi composed operas almost annually for fifty years before they achieved the dazzling perfection of *Otello* and *Falstaff*."

We agree; and we are now waiting for a *Falstaff* or an *Otello* than which nothing after all could be more signally English. And whilst we wait, something will have to be done to prepare us. Opera production must be raised to reasonable standards so that, for example, the ex-Servicemen Mr. White refers to as having learnt to like opera abroad will like it here as well; and it must be financed so that they can afford to go. It is as simple, and as complex as that. In *Some Composers of Opera* Dyneley Hussey writes of men who wrote truly immortal works. Had they not written for the opera houses of Rome, Vienna and Paris and for the people whose leisure hours were spent in those places, they would not have been known as opera composers at all. To imagine that the composition of one or two, or one or two dozen musically brilliant operas in the next five or fifty years, will of itself alone make any difference to English opera is humbug, and anyone who has set foot in a Continental opera house and been to Sadler's Wells knows it.

Mr. Hussey's seven essays on composers are pleasantly styled but seem to have suffered from a degree of compression such as is called for by the series to which his book belongs. His writing is too parenthetical and sometimes too discursive to read well under these circumstances. The combination of his English and a printer's error on p. 80, for example, makes unintelligible a whole half page of biography. At the price, packed with information as it is, this little book will please the opera lover who does not already know his composers' lives.

Arthur Jacobs' *Gilbert and Sullivan* is in the "World of Music" series, the style of which is now well-known for its lavish inclusion of period illustrations. Especially pleasing are some original theatre bill and press illustrations for Savoy operas. The book is a charmingly written statement of the well-known story of the Gilbert-Sullivan-D'Oyly Carte association with occasional brief essays in criticism.

In connection with British opera by and large the author makes some play with the inevitable fact that *The Beggar's Opera* and the Savoy operas are this country's two most lasting operatic achievements to date. This leads him to the conclusion that the way forward for the British spirit in opera is *via* light opera considered as serious music. This may be a pill that is hard for some to swallow, but already it has been variously sugared by Rutland Boughton and Vaughan Williams' ballad operas and also the by English Opera Group which rouses Mr. White's enthusiasm. They essay opera without a chorus and with a small chamber orchestra; perish the thought that they should produce any other than light opera with these resources. We could not face the prospect of a new *genre* of Grand Opera in which only the subject was grand; with soloists on the stage and in the pit held together, so to speak, with a shoe string.

In passing, some of Arthur Jacobs' references to the nature of Sullivan's composition are interesting, though naïve. For example, he refers to some of the songs being "lightened occasionally by the breath of Schubert". We would have thought the one essentially Schubertian technique of composition employed repeatedly by Sullivan was plain for all to see, though on reflection we do not know it to have been pointed out elsewhere. The trick of writing strophic songs in which each verse makes a slightly different excursion in tonalities was Schubert's own and became Sullivan's stock-in-trade. A comparison of, say, the "Regular Queen" quartet in *The Gondoliers* with, say, *Abschied*, will make this point immediately plain. Mr. Jacobs does well to compare the *ensemble*, "A Nice

Dilemma" in *Trial by Jury* with the big sextet in *Lucia di Lammermoor* for evidence of Sullivan's gift of parody. But the affinities with Schubert, whose work Sullivan knew in spirit and technique—none better, transcend all parody or, even, flattering imitation.

J. B.

The Gilbert and Sullivan Book. By Leslie Baily. Pp. xiv + 443. (Cassell.) 1952. 42s.

This is the latest and largest of the many books on its subject, and does its chosen task excellently. It is not a work of criticism, either literary or musical, but its historical account of the partnership is detailed and revealing. Mr. Baily's style is vivid and colloquial, and he uses reproductions of first-hand material—including manuscript extracts from Sullivan's diary, and drawings by Gilbert—not only as illustrations but as integral parts of the text. Indeed, the skill and good taste with which this abundant first-hand material is laid out reflects credit equally on publisher and author. Mr. Baily has had access to sources hitherto hidden, and on several points corrects the separate "official" biographies of Gilbert and of Sullivan; and although technically his book does not supersede these biographies, it must in practice take precedence over either of them in the building up of any library.

No further biographical treatment of Sullivan now seems possible until his diary is published with reasonable frankness. Mr. Baily appears to have obtained only a limited permission to quote from it; otherwise he would surely have said more about Mrs. Mary Frances Ronalds, the beautiful American whom he himself describes as "the strongest human influence in Sullivan's life" for twenty years, and whose name appears in the diary "almost daily". It was she of whom the Prince of Wales said that he would travel the length of his future kingdom to hear her sing *The Lost Chord*. Separated but not divorced from her husband, she was apparently Sullivan's mistress. Mr. Baily barely admits the relationship, refers to her in the briefest terms, and reveals hardly anything new about her except that the composer referred to her in his diary as "L.W." (Little Woman). We shall not understand Sullivan until Mrs. Ronalds is approached with the candour which, had Sullivan been a literary or political instead of a musical figure, might have already been shown by his biographers. In place of this Mr. Baily offers some new details of the composer's early engagement to Rachel Scott Russell, and reveals a proposal of marriage in 1896 to a girl of twenty—referred to here only as "Miss Violet". (She was still living in 1947, when Mr. Baily compiled the radio programmes which gave rise to this book.)

Mr. Baily fixes the first meeting of Gilbert with Sullivan in 1869, not in 1871 as has usually been thought. He brings out new documents on the famous "Carpet Quarrel" which split the partnership in 1890: Gilbert, brusque and hasty-tempered as ever, is shown as having been definitely in the wrong, and D'Oyly Carte is rescued from the rôle of pocket-Napoleon in which such previous writers as Hesketh Pearson have attempted to cast him. (The theatre carpet itself, it appears, cost only £150, not £500.) We learn of various early works of Sullivan projected but never completed—a second Symphony in D, serious operas entitled *Guinevere* and *Queen Isabel*. Not the least of Mr. Baily's merits is his frankness in presenting the financial issue confronting the composer:

"Highbrow Music could not pay for the High Life that Sullivan liked to live. The fee he received for conducting the 1883 Leeds Festival, three hundred guineas, was as much as he lost—or won—in a night at Monte Carlo. He knew that by composing another comic opera he could always refill his coffers."

Evidently Sullivan's expensive tastes were posterity's good luck, since they led to the delights of the Savoy rather than to a development of such models as *The Light of the World*.

The book is not without its passing errors. Among these may be placed the use of the word "madrigal" to refer to such concerted vocal pieces as "Strange Adventure" from *The Yeomen of the Guard*; though perhaps the author cannot be blamed for a terminology which stems from the composer himself. Mr. Baily, following the official Sullivan biography, refers to Sullivan's first and only Symphony as being in E flat: it is really in E. The journey of Sullivan and Grove to Vienna in 1867 is not dealt with quite accurately:

they unearthed there six (not five) Schubert symphonies previously unknown in Britain, but they "brought back" (in copies) only two. (See Grove's own appendix to Kreissle von Hellborn's biography of Schubert in its English translation.) Mr. Baily does well to place the Savoy works in the context of their social history, but one may doubt whether London artistic and intellectual circles discussed Marx's *Das Kapital* in the middle 'sixties; the first German edition had indeed recently appeared, but no English translation was published until twenty years later. Mr. Baily says that the 1870 Education Act laid down compulsory universal elementary education; it did not, though it paved the way for this.

Occasionally one would have welcomed a little further explanation. The reference to *Manon Lescaut* (p. 18) will puzzle the many readers who do not know this as the title of an opera by Auber (1856) as well as by Puccini. In a page of composite illustrations designed to show the spread of Gilbert and Sullivan into other languages, Mr. Baily reproduces a newspaper cutting which refers to a performance of *H.M.S. Pinafore* in Dutch in Philadelphia: he should have explained that this must have been "Pennsylvania Dutch", a form of German. Mr. Baily himself leaves out the *umlaut* on some German words and the accents on some French ones, and his sole excursion into Greek (p. 362) has two mistakes. No musician can allow him to get away with a "top F" at the end of "*Caro Nome*" (p. 309); and there are a few more minor misprints to be corrected in the future editions which this book will undoubtedly demand.

A. J.

Schumann. A Symposium, edited by Gerald Abraham. Pp. vi + 319. (Oxford University Press.) 1952. 21s.

Gerald Abraham's *symposia* have by now become a regular feature in the post-war life of English musicography. They are in fact indispensable for the serious-minded scholar who longs to stimulate and to invigorate his jaded opinions on hackneyed musical Classics. It is Professor Abraham's professional secret how to marshal all the relevant facts on the peculiarities of any composer's style in a handy volume produced by a team of well chosen specialists. The recent volume on Schumann does not deviate from the high standard set by those on Tchaikovsky, Sibelius, Schubert and Grieg. Its chief asset lies in the fact that here, for the first time in English post-war publications, the reader is confronted with the quintessence of continental Schumann-research, mostly culled from the bulky tomes of Wolfgang Boetticher who did so much to focus attention on Schumann's early diaries and youthful compositions. It is also most gratifying to follow the gradual maturing of Schumann's compositions by way of the sketchbooks, and the Editor's elucidating footnotes (especially those attached to the chapter on chamber music) make fascinating reading. Professor Abraham's team has done its best to integrate recent research and to present a comprehensive picture of this great and lovable, yet so often baffling and elusive composer. Despite the encyclopaedic quality of the whole production, the total impression derived from these highly specialized studies remains strangely inconclusive. The learned authors have developed so much critical acumen and are so wary lest they be found unwarrantably enthusiastic, that they have become slightly morose instead. In two splendidly developed essays on the songs and the symphonies (contributed by Martin Cooper and Mosco Carner) we read too much about Schumann's apparent inability to cope with the exigencies of symphonic form, his unrestrained sentimentality, and his undeniable waywardness in matters of formal construction, so that in the end we begin slightly to wonder why we still entertain so much affection for the creator of Florestan and Eusebius. The meticulous consideration of all the sketches and variants—specially in the case of the piano music, assessed by Kathleen Dale with the greatest conscientiousness—tends to crowd out the necessary evaluation of Schumann's intrinsic stylistic fingerprints. Every single member of this symposium points out the fact that Schumann's harmony is singularly original and that even his erratic counterpoint and his dreamy fugue-experiments have much to commend themselves, yet stops short at a factual analysis of the new and revolutionary fundamentals of his style. The Editor's

highly informative and brilliantly written chapter on the dramatic music and its curious affinity to certain features of Wagner's operatic style comes nearest to opening the door to the inner sanctum of Schumann's personality. None better than Professor Abraham could have written the clinching argument on Schumann's style in general, as it can be approached through his harmony, counterpoint and orchestral colour-schemes. But that final chapter (one of the most satisfying features in the previous volumes on Schubert and Grieg) is unfortunately missing here. In this connection it seems that it might even have been more profitable to deviate slightly from the pattern of earlier *symposia* in this case by dropping the scheme of chapters dealing with different types of composition, in favour of chapters cutting across the categories of piano music, song and symphony and focussing attention on Schumann's harmony, counterpoint, orchestral technique and so on. The adoption of such a modified scheme would perhaps have enabled the Editor and his team to concentrate on positive essentials rather than on irrelevant and irritating detail. That Schumann's choral and *concertante* music is rather dull and vastly inferior to his other work, is well known. Why devote whole chapters to it? All its relevant points (subtlety of harmonies, niceties of scoring) could have been mentioned and discussed in the respective general chapter. Some important questions are only lightly touched upon: Schumann's insanity and its presumable origin deserve more attention, as does also his tremendous achievement as a music critic and as the discoverer of Chopin and Berlioz. A chapter on "Schumann, the musical journalist" and on "Schumann and his contemporaries" could have provided additional information of great value. A separate chapter on the all too long overlooked *juvenilia* would have been specially welcome. It could have prevented an otherwise competent observer such as Mosco Carner from reiterating the hoary slogan of "Schumann, the lyrical miniaturist", an assumption which should really be discarded in the face of the early Symphony in G minor and the early piano Quartet in C minor. On the former Professor Abraham published a much more penetrating account in his article in *The Musical Quarterly*, January, 1951. If only the Editor (whose encyclopaedic knowledge and forceful personality permeate all the high- and by-ways of this volume) had written two or three essential chapters himself, giving us the gist of his own Schumann research, he could easily have made more palatable such recalcitrant matter as the chapter on the chamber music, which does not make for easy reading in A. E. F. Dickinson's painstaking but slightly pedestrian investigation.

Willi Reich's cleverly chosen extracts from letters and diaries conjure up the picture of the lovable *Davidsbündler* with its romantic dualism of tendencies. The analysis of the symphonies is a piece of first class writing on a ticklish subject and Dr. Carner's account of Mahler's orchestral emendations* is highly informative. Enjoyable as is Martin Cooper's witty commentary on Schumann the *Liederkomponist*, he is too much out of sympathy with Schumann's poets, from a purely literary point of view, to do his subject full justice. The reviewer finally predicts that as a result of this symposium scholars will be stimulated to an ever deeper penetration into the mysterious recesses of Schumann's mind. And perhaps one day a sequel will be written, but this time from a more literary angle. Such a volume, edited by Professor Abraham, could become the crowning achievement of his own research in this direction. It should be the fervent hope of every genuine Schumann lover that he may soon settle down to it.

H. F. R.

Donald Francis Tovey. By Mary Grierson. Pp. xii + 337. (Oxford University Press.) 1952. 21s.

The author describes her work as a biography based on letters. For that reason among others the reader will not expect her to present a comprehensive study of her subject; this biography is neither complete nor impartial, but so thoroughly readable that your reviewer found it difficult to put down.

Reading between Dr. Grierson's lines, we soon discover that Tovey never enjoyed much real success in the general sense of that term, nor received anything approaching the public

* See also THE MUSIC REVIEW, II/2, May, 1941: pp. 97-110 [Ed.]

acclaim often accorded to persons of inferior attainment. Certainly as a conductor he was not the equal of Leslie Heward or Hyam Greenbaum, nor as composer or scholar was he more distinguished than Cecil Gray. Yet he was something more than one of his own "interesting historical figures": he had great natural ability and fostered the art of music for all he was worth. Like Heward, Greenbaum, Gray and a few others—not all of whom are yet dead—he was a man with a mission. Such men are out of tune with this commercial century; they cannot combine with it even in road-hog counterpoint nor, usually, do they think it worthwhile to acquire any veneer of esteem for those who have attained influential posts in the musical profession by means other than personal merit and integrity.

Future generations will think of Tovey as the author of the books listed at the end of Dr. Grierson's biography and there is no doubt that they form a fair basis for critical assessment; yet we who heard him deliver his lecture, *The Main Stream of Music*, in June, 1938, retain a first-hand impression of his dynamic personality which cannot be recreated through the printed page. Miss Weisse apparently described this lecture as "a quart put into a pint pot". Two quarts would be a nearer estimate. Tovey's concentration of matter, coupled in this instance with great speed of delivery, left the present writer conscious of having assisted at the birth of a masterpiece of critical dissertation but at the same time suffering from acute mental indigestion. But the experience was well worth the indigestion which soon succumbed to a subsequent reading of the essay at a more leisurely pace.

On pp. 174-5 Dr. Grierson criticizes Professor Dent's views of Tovey without stating that the latter are taken from *THE MUSIC REVIEW*, III/1, pp. 1-9.

BERLIOZ

Berlioz and the Romantic Century. By Jacques Barzun. Two vols. Pp. xvi + 573 and 511. (Gollancz.) 1951. 63s.

A Bibliography of the Musical and Literary Works of Hector Berlioz. By Cecil Hopkinson. Pp. xx + 205. (Edinburgh Bibliographical Society.) 1951. 63s.

Professor Barzun is a brave man. He must be aware of the cavalier treatment accorded in this country to works of musical scholarship emanating from the United States, for that has become something of an international scandal; but he may not know that to write seriously on the subject of Berlioz and to present the result to the English reader is doubly to court the displeasure of the local punditry. In fact the snipers are already out, so let us examine the object of their hostility.

These 1100 pages comprise far more than a mere biography. There are thirty-five chapters and thirteen plates, plus 141 pages devoted to chronology, bibliography, acknowledgments, index of misconceptions (delightful phrase!) and of names and subjects. Professor Barzun has admitted that his work could be improved by condensation—and his hero and central subject certainly tends from time to time to be submerged in ancillary matter of only indirect relevance—while the admirable appendices would be rendered even more useful by the careful excision of inessential matter. He may have felt, however, that about Berlioz and his *milieu* ignorance was so rife that every fragment of contingent information must be presented. The writer is inclined to agree: while for those who do not, it is surely a little churlish to complain too vociferously about over-generosity. The book bears witness, almost throughout, to its author's indomitable enthusiasm for his subject and what a joy that is to the reader long sated with the ultra-prosaic objectivity and dry-as-dust dissection so often served up by desiccated pedants as music history and criticism, for whose benefit we have never discovered. Professor Barzun has been accused, on the whole fairly, of being too sparing with his dates; but these can be found elsewhere, while his account of the errors in the Breitkopf and Härtel edition of Berlioz' works cannot. It might have been possible for the author to go further in this respect, but his twenty-four pages devoted to the transgressions of Malherbe and Weingartner should help to drive would-be performers back to the early French editions whose faults

are admittedly sufficiently numerous, but mostly straightforward and obvious; not seriously misleading as the "Complete" edition often is. By modern standards this book is printed on quite good paper and substantially bound: but the margins are too small and the impression is inconsistent; even in these utilitarian days the reader has a right to expect all pages to be black and white, not to range through myriad shades of grey. No doubt the American edition is better.

By contrast Hopkinson's bibliography, published at last after so many delays, is a model of first-class typography and production; and, so far as the music is concerned, the compiler has set a high standard of accuracy and reliability. Although bibliographers prefer their craft to be classified as an exact science, it may be argued that it has not yet achieved such *status* where music is concerned and Mr. Hopkinson's invaluable pioneer work is by no means free from discrepancies and omissions. These are more numerous in the various appendices than in the main body of the bibliography proper, but this too suffers from one serious defect: that items are none too readily located, owing to the bibliographer's somewhat arbitrary order of listing and the absence of any index in the final pages. Mr. Hopkinson is well aware that he has not reached finality, but he has achieved a great deal. Particularly valuable are the many plates which are beautifully reproduced and also appendix F which summarizes the history of all Berlioz' French publishers.

G. N. S.

Reviews of Music

J. S. Bach. The piano concertos after Vivaldi, Marcello, Telemann, etc. (Peters No. 217.)

A reissue, edited by Arnold Schering, of fourteen concertos (two more, pp. 121-126, apparently form a second volume), of which six are by Vivaldi and one by Telemann, first issued under the editorship of S. W. Dehn and F. A. Roitzsch. The beautiful D minor *adagio* of the single example by Marcello may have played a greater part than the rest in the evolution of the central movement of the *Italian* Concerto (1735). The most interesting are the two by Bach's patron in Weimar, Herzog Johann Ernst, who died at nineteen (1715). The slow movement of that in C major is in F minor and anticipates the style of C. P. E. Bach. The difference from the first edition consists in correctly ascribing only six concertos to Vivaldi and the rest elsewhere, the addition of bracketed marks of expression and the letters T and S to denote orchestra and soloist respectively.

E. H. W. M.

Schubert. 1. *Prometheus*. 2. *Grenzen der Menschheit* (*The Confines of Man*). 3. *Am Bach im Frühling* (*By the brook in Spring*). 4. *Bei dir allein* (*Thou alone!*). Translated by Richard Capell. (Augener.) 1 and 2: 1s. 6d. each; 3 and 4: 1s.

There are those to whom the idea of singing *lieder* in any language but German is anathema. ("It has generally been assumed that song-translations were for the ignorant and vulgar. . . . The people who really mattered would sing the original text, no doubt.") Others, the minority possibly, realize that for nine out of every ten English listeners to a recital of *lieder* the singer might just as well be vocalizing the songs. Accordingly, this minority view holds, and rightly so, that *any* English version, even the inept translation which was issued by nineteenth century publishing houses, is preferable to the uncomprehended original. When, however, one finds the translation ably done, the result reading like an English poem, and the greatest care taken that the musical emphasis on salient points in the German text should fall correctly on those in the corresponding English one, then it is difficult to see how the objector can sustain his case. These four representative songs of Schubert have been translated in just such a way by Richard Capell. The

Goethe poems, in particular, are outstanding, even though the translations were inevitably restricted since the music must be served. What could be better for the verse in *Grenzen der Menschheit* beginning: "Steht er mit festen, markigen Knochen" than—

"Should he the earthborn, Delving and reaping,
Live by naught but sun and rain, Seedtime and harvest,
Less is he even, Toiling and mowing,
Less than the oak-tree, And the vine beside him."

It is the language of *Job*.

If the poems read well, it is a measure of their excellence that they sing even more satisfactorily. In the Schober song *By the brook in Spring* we have a perfect example of Schubert's high lyric art now wedded to an English poem—of Tennysonian vintage shall we say? Singing these songs to Richard Capell's words, with every example of Schubert's textual illumination now lighting our own familiar tongue, we can glimpse something of what the impact of these songs must have been on their first hearers.

M. J. E. B.

OLD MUSICAL POSERS AND NEW WORLD SOLUTIONS

Leonard Bernstein. *The Age of Anxiety*. Symphony No. 2 for piano and orchestra (after W. H. Auden). (Schirmer.) New York, 1950. Two-piano score. \$3.50.

Motto: . . . We are mocked by unmeaning; among us fall
Aimless arrows, hurting at random
As we plan to pain.

(W. H. Auden: *The Age of Anxiety*.)

Surely Mr. Leonard Bernstein (whom a very favourably disposed reviewer calls "the most typical among the younger American composers"—*cf.* MUSIC REVIEW, X, 3)—has as much a right to take his cue from the "fascinating and hair-raising" poem of W. H. Auden (first published in 1948), as Liszt and Berlioz to look for symphonic inspiration in the verses of Lamartine and Shakespeare. As long as a composer leaves it to his critical audience to decide whether his music is a match for the poetry supplying the chosen programmatic background, nobody is likely to cavil at his literary choice. Unfortunately Mr. Bernstein has tried—in an incredibly naïve and intolerably self-congratulatory preface—to forestall any unbiased assessment of his efforts by declaring blandly: "... No one could be more astonished than I at the extent to which the programmaticism of this work has been carried. . . . I had not planned a 'meaningful' work. . . . Yet, when each section was finished, I discovered . . . detail after detail of programmatic relation to the poem. . . ."

Here I beg to differ. I submit moreover that Mr. Bernstein has done nothing of the sort and that his music limps sadly behind W. H. Auden's "Baroque Eclogue", the slick versification, resourceful technique of infinite alliteration and quaint imagery of which calls at least for the combined creative powers of a Schönberg plus a Stravinsky, from whom Mr. Bernstein has extracted some much abused musical patterns such as the "Piano-Protagonist" from *Petrouchka* and some irresponsible play with tone-rows. The fierce monotony of Auden's verse (which sometimes comes dangerously near to a travesty of an English translation of Wotan's monologues) could perhaps have found an adequate complement in a music of great unity of design. Instead Mr. Bernstein presents us with an *olla podrida* of styles and recipes for sonority, culled from every department of contemporary music. The "Seven Ages" are musically expressed by a set of 14 variations (obviously influenced by certain technical processes in the vastly superior music of his teacher Aaron Copland) on the theme of a descending scale passage (*cf.* piano score, page 4, third bar after B).

The "Dirge" bemoaning the loss of "our lost dad, our colossal father" (a near relation of George Orwell's "Big Brother"), making some play with barbaric chord progressions *à la Sacre*, leads to a middle section of "almost Brahmsian romanticism" (Bernstein's

own critical evaluation, which is sadly contradicted by the musical facts). This section of obnoxious triviality is ultimately relieved by a "nostalgic" solo for the piano, to be played only "until the air is clear". In such devastatingly funny asides Mr. Bernstein undoubtedly makes up for the missing originality of his musical themes. And when a kind of fantastic piano-jazz (in the section "The Masque") is played first "on top of the keys", later "in the keys", the composer has succeeded in knocking his critics flat, by then helplessly rocking with laughter. The piano-protagonist, "traumatized by the intervention of the orchestra", is continuing his jazz (which turns out to be a particularly feeble type of "hot" music, vintage 1925) against the background of a musical statement of "something pure" in the trumpets (it is only the hackneyed military signal of a falling fourth, probably suggested by the sound of some fire brigade), while the "Epilogue" flatly contradicts the sincere pessimism of Auden's poem by tacking on a kind of cheap musical transfiguration scene à la Richard Strauss, in which—funnily enough—the piano-protagonist takes no part, except for the very comfortable rôle of an "observer". Mr. Bernstein's own comment runs as follows: "At the very end he seizes upon it with one eager chord of confirmation. . . . The way is open; but, at the conclusion, is still stretching long before him. . . ." These final words of Mr. Bernstein's "fascinating and hair-raising" preface find a sympathetic echo in his reviewer's heart. The way indeed is open for him to forsake in future the narrow path of creative musicianship and henceforth to exploit his talents for conducting, piano playing and lecturing (cf. *MUSIC REVIEW*, X, 3) to the full. Mr. Bernstein (who evidently has penned his prefatory note for almost every contingency) exclaims with a *tremolo* in his voice: "If the charge of theatricality in a symphonic work is a valid one, I am willing to plead guilty. . . ." Not even this magnanimous gesture will save him from the real charge of having produced a work outstanding in its utter absence of musical originality.

H. F. R.

MUSIC FOR TWO PIANOS

Norman Fulton. *Waltz; Air; Polka*; for two pianos. (Oxford University Press.) 5s.; 4s. 6d.; 4s. 6d. respectively.

Arthur Benjamin. *Caribbean Dance; Two Jamaican Street Songs*, for two pianos. (Boosey & Hawkes.)

Aaron Copland. *Danzon Cubano*, for two pianos. (Boosey & Hawkes.) 9s. 6d.

Falla, arr. Dougherty. *Dance of the Miller's Wife* (from the *Three Cornered Hat*) arranged for two pianos. (Chester.) 8s.

Norman Fulton modestly heads his pieces "some light music for Joan and Valerie Trimble", and the description "light music" fits all the music here to be considered; a pleasant and unaccustomed task for the harassed reviewer! But in fact, it is instructive in surveying music of this type from a variety of composers, to see how different in kind and quality their productions can be, and also to note to what extent one's normal canons of judgment still apply; interesting, too, to observe how completely natural and characteristic is the "modern" harmony which accompanies them. Some of the chords in Mr. Fulton's pieces (which will certainly be popular) have a fearsome look on paper; but most of them dissolve pleasantly enough amid cascades of quavers and semiquavers. One criticism, indeed, of these pieces is that the harmony is not quite consistent: there is too much *alternation* of the harsh with the lush. One feels also that the composer has followed too closely a pattern of two piano music which soon palls: the regularity and motionless movement of the quick-note embroidery, so often at the tinkling top of the piano, become wearisome, and light music needs more melodic invention than Mr. Fulton's chromatics provide. Still, all the pieces have a swing, and the *Polka*, in particular, a pleasant stamping rhythm.

Mr. Benjamin follows a pattern too; but it is very much his own, and fits so neatly the sort of music he is setting out to write that few will quarrel with the absence of surprises. Yet the basic simplicity of Mr. Benjamin's design is always a surprise. There is

no interweaving of the two Jamaican folk-songs which form the basis of his *Caribbean Dance*, for instance. The two tunes are played one after the other; there is a little "development" and a change of key in the middle, but the piece rides safely to its unpretentious end on the back of the ever continuing Rumba rhythm. This is dance music which may well be proud of the name. Even the two *Jamaican Street Songs* (which are about as banal in themselves as any other street songs) gain something from Mr. Benjamin's light handling; he only needs, for instance, a subtle touch of colour to emphasize the wistfulness of *Cookie's* monotonous refrain. One must comment also on the sobriety of the composer's instrumental writing. As a rule, he avoids the extremes of the two instruments' compass, but exploits their distinctive sonority by skilful dovetailing.

Aaron Copland's rather dry instrumental style does not take too happily to so sonorous a medium as the two piano combination; and in his *Danzon Cubano*, except for some rather unreal antiphony, there is a lack of characteristic effects. Nevertheless, for all the composer's addiction to rather meaningless reiterations of patterns, there is some effective music here, with more warmth than in some of Copland's compositions, and with the sparkle which we expect from his dance music.

Falla's *Fandango* from the *Three Cornered Hat* fits well into this collection of dance music. No arranger can hope to do justice to the composer's scoring, but Mr. Dougherty has tackled the job with intelligence, keeping, as he should, to the spirit rather than the strict letter of the music. This will be a useful addition to the repertoire of two piano music.

N. G. L.

John Weinzwieg. *Divertimento* No. 1 for flute and strings

Divertimento No. 2 for oboe and strings.

String orchestra arranged for pf. solo by Harold Perry. (Boosey & Hawkes.) 5s. od. each.

Both these *divertimenti* can be recommended to string orchestras who wish to employ either a flute or oboe player. Mr. Weinzwieg's music is slightly "after" Martinù, in that emphasis is laid rather more on rhythmic than thematic development and it is a slight affectation on the composer's part to write 7/8 when what he wants is 4/8 + 3/8: the use of asymmetric rhythms is not of itself a virtue. In his slow movements the composer shows himself possessing a poetic imagination, but his *allegro* sections are in a rather desiccated vein that was once *à la mode* but is now becoming somewhat *vieux jeu*. This type of music has the advantage of being extremely easy to write and it is very hard to stop once one has started: it has the disadvantages of a drug habit without any of the compensating pleasures. Mr. Weinzwieg's second *Divertimento* would seem to indicate that the cure is under way and the reviewer will wait for his next publications with interest.

Bohuslav Martinù. Symphony No. 4. Full Score. (Boosey & Hawkes.)

Symphony No. 5. Full Score. (Boosey & Hawkes.)

Benjamin Britten. *A Wedding Anthem*. (Boosey & Hawkes.) 4s. od.

Ernest Bloch. *Concerto Symphonique* for piano and orchestra, arr. for two pianos by the composer. (Boosey & Hawkes.) 17s. 6d.

It comes as a shock to learn that Martinù has reached his 60th birthday. He has maintained the *status* of a promising youngster for longer than most and does not even yet show any signs of settling down into being an Old Master. His work is extremely difficult to pigeonhole. No one could mistake his music for anyone else's (except perhaps his pupils': it is very easy to imitate), yet for all the idiosyncrasy of style, there is always, for me at any rate, a curious lack of personality behind the music. Martinù writes with assured mastery—there is nothing tentative about his work; his orchestration, with the exception of his unfortunate use of the piano as a reinforcement for the wind, is, I should imagine, the most masterly of all contemporary composers. The only possible rival that suggests itself is Roberto Gerhard. Yet somehow, in spite of all these demonstrable

virtues, something is lacking. The music communicates no emotion although it is emotional in context. It is not abstract music, whatever that may be, but something insulates the hearer from the composer and as a result one admires the technical accomplishment rather than the total effect. As far as the fourth Symphony is concerned a happy exception may be made for the magnificent scherzo, one of the masterpieces of our time: the other movements are inferior, but the whole work is extremely agreeable. The fifth Symphony, which at the time I write has, disgracefully enough, not yet been heard here, is, taken in its totality, a better work than the Fourth. It is not so immediately attractive and compared to its predecessor is very restrained in tone until the finale is reached. There are only three movements, the scherzo being omitted. The first two movements do not perhaps contrast too well with each other and the introduction to the finale which relates to the opening of the first movement seems to carry the identity of mood further than is perhaps altogether desirable in a symphony. However, the principal part of the finale which introduces a magnificent swinging melody brings a contrast that is all the more welcome, maybe, because so long delayed. The monotony as far as emotional atmosphere is concerned is due to the fact that all three movements are very closely integrated thematically and there is even a further reference to earlier themes in the middle of the finale.

Mr. Britten's *Wedding Anthem* is the kind of competent *kapellmeistermusik* that we have come to expect from this once promising composer. However, every talent must have its doldrums and the decline in Mr. Britten's after the sensational success of *Peter Grimes* has been marked so let us hope that this anthem represents the nadir and that we shall now see a more rapid ascent.

No one now can deny Bloch's mastery, though opinions as to the value of his music divide sharply. The present writer can be ranked among the admirers, but my appreciation of his music is offset by a distaste for his scoring which I find thick and opaque. When I heard the *Concerto symphonique* the scoring seemed less felicitous than ever. In the two-piano version another reason suggests itself for the lack of impression the work made. For much of the time the thematic centre of the music rests in the orchestra, the soloist indulging in ornamentation or merely doubling the orchestra. Now writing *bravura* ornamentation for the piano is a feat which few people who are not themselves virtuosi can accomplish and in the work under consideration a large proportion of the solo part could be omitted, without any loss as far as the musical development is concerned. Apart from the opening of the first movement the only time the soloist is unaccompanied is in the *cadenza*. Thus the work is neither concerto nor symphony and must be reckoned among the less successful of the master's compositions. In spite of this it contains, needless to say, much of interest and some suggestive formal developments. R. G.

Bernard Stevens. *Five Inventions* for piano, op. 14. (Lengnick.) 3s.

These miniatures are much more important than their size would seem to warrant, for they form yet another programmatic attempt by a modern composer to solve the long division of "structural counterpoint: fragmentary tonality" without a remainder. Yet in the critical cases (*Inventions* 2 and 4) a remainder remains. In these two preludes, the contrapuntal scheme of statement—complete strict inversion—complete restatement (which is common to all five essays) determines a categorical ternary form. The harmony is, throughout the A section, free, until, at the entry of B (no. 2, bar 12, last beat) it becomes a function of counterpoint; yet even in the ensuing inversion it mirrors its erstwhile freedom. In *Inventions* 1, 3, 5, on the other hand, musical space is organized to a degree (never attained in 12-tone music, and only possible at all in miniatures) where nothing is a function of something else any longer; thus, there is in truth no "remainder", but, equally, there is no freedom. Complete interrelation of harmony and counterpoint seems to result, in modern music anyway, in structures which the mathematician would call "over-determined". In the third *Invention*, four minor keys, at distances of minor thirds, and thus equally dividing the octave, are ordered to revolve round the tonic E in a manner that completely and symmetrically exhausts the tonal space of E, G, B \flat , and C \sharp minor.

Starting from E (o) and progressing a minor third up (+) or down (-) every bar, the plan of the first 16 bars would be

o, +1, +2, +1, o, -1, -2, -1, -2, -3, -2, -1, o, +1, +2, +1, o.

When, at the entry of the middle-part (bar 17), not only the original *tune* is inverted, but also the *harmonies*, which now move on *major* tonics in the opposite direction (*i.e.* o, -1, -2, -1, o, +1, *etc.*)—a considerable feat of skill if the return of A should be strict, as it is—then, at this moment, the A-B-A structure has become as over-determined as a right-angled isosceles triangle of which the hypotenuse were given in addition to the side.

Mr. Stevens seems aware of this danger, for in *Inventions* 1 and 5, which, treating the same problem, flank no. 3 as two pendants, the latter's deadly crystallinity is shot with irregular matter that acts as a token of life. In no. 1, the exhaustive categorical ternary form has its harmonic counterpart in a tritonicity of D, G♯, B♯ major, exhaustive of the harmonic space created by the tritonal division of the octave, and exclusive of all other tonalities save its relative minors, on which the middle-part (B) is constructed. But here, in contradistinction to no. 3, the (three) tonics relieve each other at distances of five crotchets in 4/4 time, resulting in a 15-bar phrase whose 60 crotchets are heard melodically as 15×4 yet harmonically as 12×5 . Thus, at least the verisimilitude of freedom is preserved.—Speaking in general, Mr. Stevens does not wholly succeed in solving the modern harmonic-contrapuntal problem posed in this didactic set, a problem that, as we said, may not admit of an elegant solution. But his attempt is worth a hundred would-be modern pieces that never show the slightest awareness of this problem's existence.

TWO QUARTETS

Willem Pijper. No. 3. (Lengnick.) 5s.

Benjamin Frankel. No. 4. (Augener.) 4s. 6d.

It is very enterprising of Lengnick to publish, from manuscript, the five quartets of Pijper which have been performed from hand-written copies on the continent but are completely unknown here. No. 3, written in 1923, will never be a popular work since the strong intra-musical coherence of this rugged expressionistic score lacks, like so many works of that period, the polished surface of repertory music. But this, of course, is as should be with a deeply serious work in which atonal leanings are alloyed to impressionistic longings—or rather the memories of such longings—with a high purpose and resourcefulness that forbid one to use the word "experimental". In fact, although the argument of this style is tenable for the instance of one or two works only, it is nevertheless the argument of a master. The severely unified material of the three movements is utilized with an economy at first glance baffling, at second convincing. Even the accessories of this score—its many expressions and bowing marks, wide positions, *etc.*—are exclusively in the service of Pijper's motivic economy. One hopes that a quartet with both patience and brains will take up this work.

Mastery, here not in a phase of unrest but of relative stability, is also the mark of Frankel's latest Quartet. There has been a steady development in this composer over the last years, and he is now at the point where, at least in his major works, every vestige of labour has been extirpated from the finished product, which yet retains its full poetic resonance: a remarkable attainment which is specially welcome in a composer of such great lyrical gift and subdued yet strongly individual humour; for both these qualities are apt to wilt away under manipulation. This is not to say that this work is of slight build or loose construction: on the contrary, Frankel's formal adroitness (a perspicacity for formal problems one is almost tempted to call, by way of a contradiction in terms, "inspired common sense") is in evidence all the time; most perhaps in the very Frankelian near-monotheistic finale which combines rondo with variation features. But this very fact that the finished piece of music is no longer cognizant of its creator means that the listener can trust his composer in matters of detail as well as in matters of construction. It also means that the composer, serenely certain of what he is doing, will no longer be afraid of

his task. Only an utterly unafraid composer could afford, not so much this economy of material which is relatively easy, but this economy of expression. In the scherzo, a half-ironic, half-melancholic *valse* (a speciality of Frankel's—and quite distinct from its nearest Prokofievian relatives) acquires full meaning through a surprisingly small number of notes in a setting which is not even very compressed. The middle part of the slow movement (letter H) achieves lyrical greatness (*dolce e dolente*) with even fewer notes. But what benefits most from Frankel's poise is his handling of tonality. The C major-C minor tonality of the work (expressed jointly in the major-minor final chords) has strong leanings to E \flat major on the one, and A minor on the other side, besides touching on, by way of transition rather than modulation, the keys near-related to C, with the aid of some bitonality and a special kind of very refined interrupted cadence. All these rather kaleidoscopic shiftings of the key centre (none of them obtrusive yet all very individual) occur now in Frankel with the utmost self-assurance. There is no space here to go into this question in detail, but an essay on the development of Frankel's key-sense should prove rewarding.

T. W. Southam. Two Songs for Voice and Piano. *Nemea* (Lawrence Durrell), *A Holy Sonnet* (John Donne). (Augener.) 2s. each.

Nemea would be a straightforward old-fashioned ballad if the composer did not essay to match the sham sophistication of the words by $7/8$ time and an occasional "startling" modulation. For the rest, the music remains naïve, with disastrous effect. The Donne *Sonnet* ("At the round earth's imagined corners . . ."), after a respectable though wholly uninspired start, sets out (*Lento*) on one of those organist's improvisations on *Elijah* that begin with Mendelssohn unadulterated and proceed to add a few "wrong notes" for the fun of it. Accompanists with a developed sense of humour are recommended to play G \sharp (as printed) for G \flat in the treble of the 7th bar from the end. P. H.

Gramophone Records

✓ Mozart: *Piano Concerto in A major* (K.488).

Walter Gieseking and Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Karajan.

Columbia LX 1510-LXS 1513. 34s.

If I thoroughly recommend this set, it is for the deeply imaginative playing, quite free from mannerism or striving after effects, musical or virtuoso, of Gieseking. Indeed it might be possible to hear his reading of the *adagio* as too poker-faced, but after four or five hearings the virtues make themselves felt, for Gieseking does not do the listener's work for him; he does not cause the movement to sound expressive, since it has always been that potentially—but his implicit treatment makes the listener receive an expressive impression. Tiny complaints about a superb performance are that he rather dashes off the *cadenza*, and that some phrases in the rondo are too clipped for long-term satisfaction.

Karajan's treatment of the orchestra's part is too heavy-handed for my taste—possessors of his K.543 set will know what I mean—and I am sure it does not match the domesticated fluency and intimacy of Gieseking's view. The side-breaks in the first movement unhappily come twice in the middle of a theme. Near the start of side 3 there is a change in sound characteristic, and side 7 begins with a loud case of pre-echo. But Gieseking's performance will need some equalling. When the history of the gramophone comes to be written, the week or so of sessions between Gieseking, Karajan and the Philharmonia in June, 1951, will almost certainly be reckoned a high-spot.

Mendelssohn: *Overture, Die schöne Melusine.*

Scherzo from the Octet, arr. for orchestra by the composer.

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Beecham.

His Master's Voice DB 9711-2. 19s. 5d.

The Overture, which remains a curiosity beside *Ruy Blas* and *Midsummer Night's Dream*, deserves note for its charming first idea which may describe the mermaid rising from the sea. The other material is conventional Mendelssohn. Beecham does what he so often can to make a mediocre piece appear a master-work, but the handling of those tub-thumping *tutti* is too heavy for enjoyment (which is what the Overture only deserves), and the string playing is not up to Beecham standard though the woodwind solos are ravishing. The recording is rather dead, in general, without atmosphere. Some of the climaxes overload. The surfaces are good until one boosts top frequencies to get a more vivid sound. There was a swish on my copy three-quarters of the way through the third side.

The fill-up is better served for atmosphere in the recording, but the strings do not play with precision nor rhythmic life, and the wind chording in the subsidiary idea is ragged.

Wagner: *Overture, Der fliegende Holländer.*

Brahms: *Hungarian Dance No. 1 in G minor.*

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Furtwängler.

His Master's Voice DB 9727-8. 19s. 5d.

Furtwängler, whose unreserved admirer I cannot claim to be, gives a splendidly dramatic reading of the Overture, contriving to put his listeners in the position of the first night audience. The atmosphere of the recording is spacious and theatrical; as against this, some detail is lost in the middle section and the brass is too near the mike in the build-up to the apotheosis. The surfaces vary from movement to movement.

In the *Hungarian Dance* some top-cut is needed to correct the over-recorded bite of the violins who hog the limelight.

Delius: *North Country Sketches.*

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Beecham.

Columbia LX 1399-1401. 29s. 1½d.

After hearing these records it is not difficult to guess why the *North Country Sketches* are not more frequently played. The best music in them equals anything Delius wrote, for warm sonority and harmonic tenderness, but not all the music is of that best. Beecham is the only conductor who coaxes quality out of the less successful moments and even he and his orchestra cannot wheedle the scoring, at figure 21 of the "Dance", and figure 16 of the "Winter Landscape", from teashop affinities—it sounds thin and scratchy. The finest passages, large chunks of "Autumn" and of the "Winter Landscape", come from the same ink-pot as *Seadrift* and *A Village Romeo and Juliet*, and *Paris* too. The beginning of the fourth piece, "The March of Spring", is remarkable for its odd scoring.

Beecham's control of sonority, harmonic movement and melodic line is as masterly as ever (example, the last two pages of "Autumn"). Some mishaps in the playing should not have been passed: a false bassoon entry in "Winter", scrambled high violin line several times, and so on; the RPO was below par when this recording was made. The acoustics of the studio are hardly spacious enough for this very atmospheric music. But when all these complaints are made the discs must be recommended.

Alfven: *Swedish Rhapsody "Midsommervarka".*

Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, c. Thor Johnson.

Decca X 569. 9s. 8½d.

Musically this high spirited, extrovert *potpourri* is hardly considerable, despite Wagnerian and Delian moments of charm. The material falls irretrievably into 8-bar units and the nationalism, though not aggressive, is personal in its appeal. Perhaps the

Americans find something sympathetic in its ebullience touched with sentimentality, since the Cincinnati Orchestra has recorded it; perhaps Thor Johnson feels patriotic about it. Between them they give a highly polished performance; the recording is extremely clear and vivid.

W. S. M.

✓ *Wagner: Die Meistersinger.*

Complete recording, Bayreuth Festival, August, 1951, c. Karajan.
Columbia LX 1465-98. £16 10s. 1d.

✓ *Verdi: La Traviata.*

Complete recording with N.B.C. Orchestra, c. Toscanini.
His Master's Voice DB 9683-95. £6 6s. 2½d.

Only selected excerpts from these complete issues have been received for review; to itemize them makes too great a demand on space and we must presume that quality, musical and technical, is adequately sampled in what is received. As regards *Meistersinger*, what we have heard is quite the worst effort ever at recording a stage production. Every record tails off in quality after the first half-minute, most turnovers are badly placed, some sides cut off in the middle of a bar (even a note!) and the orchestra is allowed to drown concerted passages in many of those places where the quality of what we hear is bearable. Two or three sides in the middle of act III are just passable and, by a miracle, the musicianship of some of those concerned shines through in "Selig, wie die sonne". From this we see that the quintet, Schwarzkopf (Eva), Hopf (Walther), Edelman (Sachs), Unger (David) and Malaniuk were at home in their craft. We can hear no evidence that this may be true of anyone else connected with the whole thing.

The prelude to act I of *Traviata* makes two facts immediately evident: that the hands of Toscanini have more than kept their cunning, and that, with engineering such as this, he is wasting his time. The first record is worth buying, the prelude being followed by an opening *scena* taken, at last, with the right *tempi* throughout, so that true Verdi comes through in spite of poor recording and none too accurate singing. On the few records received, Albanese's *vibrato* tired us, in the more complaining of Violetta's outbursts especially, Merrill's Germont and Peerce's Alfredo never moved us and the N.B.C. strings seemed frozen to a dry coldness of tone by some malevolence of engineering. The records achieve only one end; it is now essential to anyone who knows what Verdi stands for that Toscanini be persuaded to produce a recorded performance under auspices which hold out some hope. Better singers, better engineers and better studios exist elsewhere.

Beethoven: An die ferne Geliebte, Op. 98.

Fischer-Dieskau, acc. Moore.

His Master's Voice DB 9681-2. 19s. 5d.

Schubert: Der Erlkönig, Op. 1, and

Schumann: Die Beiden Grenadiere, Op. 49, Vol. 2, No. 1.

Fischer-Dieskau, acc. Moore.

His Master's Voice DB 21350. 9s. 8½d.

Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau has it in him to become a fine *Lieder* singer. His technique is comprehensive to an uncommon degree. The imperceptibly smooth *crescendo* and *diminuendo*, the instantaneous twist of intonation, the ability to sing at any volume precisely in tune. All this and all else that matters technically are clearly there to command. But he must learn to discipline these qualities. Beethoven's cycle is finely sung; the singer's inability to realize that the human voice cannot remain intelligible below a certain volume level, accurately and clearly though it may be used, provides the one major weakness. The effect suggested is that piano and singer were sometimes sliding away from, and towards, each other.

The Schubert and Schumann songs are less convincing. *Erlkönig* is dramatic, but there is neither fear nor terror; the *Grenadiers* is too sentimental. The distinction between self-effacing nobility and sentimentality commonly defeats the German artist; part of the trouble is that, in *Beiden Grenadiere*, as elsewhere, it defeated Schumann.

SCHNABEL

Beethoven: *Sonata in E, Op. 109.*

His Master's Voice DB 9674-6. 29s. 1½d.

Sonata in C minor, Op. 111, and

Rondo in A minor.

Artur Schnabel.

His Master's Voice DB 9677-80. 38s. 10d.

The Beethoven Sonata Society's twenty-year-old edition of the complete piano works is unobtainable and the present records are part of a re-issue made as a memorial to Artur Schnabel. The reviewer's task is simple; it is to advise the reader that he must beg, borrow, overdraw or steal to take in all that appears. Op. 109 and 111 should, with Shakespeare's sonnets, be available to every civilized mind and the quality of Schnabel's performance of them needs no new comment. The recordings are identical with those from the original albums, are still the equal of some newer piano issues and respond well to modern amplifier design. In these penurious days, those who have Solomon's magnificent performance of Op. 111 (His Master's Voice C 4000-2) might wait for Schnabel's until better times and lose little meanwhile.

J. B.

Schubert: *Four Impromptus, op. 90.**

His Master's Voice DB 21320; 21335; 21351. 29s. 1½d.

*Impromptu in F minor, op. 142 : 1.**

His Master's Voice DB 21382. 9s. 8½d.

Artur Schnabel.

Schnabel: *Rhapsody for Orchestra.*

Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Kletzki.

Columbia LX 8843-4. 19s. 5d.

The Schubert *Impromptus* must have been among the last records Schnabel made and we must hope that the remaining three are due for early release. Schnabel's performances never qualified for his own description of another's—more immaculate than conception: indeed, the terse concentration of thought and utter rejection of all superfluous embellishment which combined to illumine his greatest interpretations of the music of others may be said, paradoxically, to stand in the way of popular acceptance of his own, as exemplified in his *Rhapsody* which is here given a superb performance and good engineering. The reader with a stomach for "modern" music at its most uncompromising who is prepared to lavish patient concentration on Schnabel's *Rhapsody* may develop a feeling for it rather deeper than mere respect for its technical assurance and ingenuity of orchestration: the writer has not. There seems little reason to suppose that future generations will hold Schnabel in higher esteem as a composer than we now regard him as an interpreter of Schubert, Weber, Beethoven and late Mozart. Readers with enquiring minds are referred to Schnabel's own book, *Music and the line of most resistance* (Princeton: Oxford University Press), and to an excellent article by Konrad Wolff in the February (1952) issue of *Music Survey*.

ORCHESTRAL

Bach: *Violin Concerto No. 1 in A minor.*

Goldberg, Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Süsskind SW 8140-1

Beethoven: *Piano Concerto No. 4 in G, op. 58.*

Giesecking, Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Karajan LX 1443-6*

Berlioz: *Overture, Beatrice et Benedict.*

Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Kletzki LX 1529

Bruch: *Violin Concerto No. 1 in G minor.*

Campoli, New Symphony Orchestra, c. Kisch AX 558-60

Delius: *Koanga, Closing Scene.*

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Beecham LX 1502

* Strongly recommended.

Haydn: Violin Concerto in F.

Pougnnet, Salter (harpsichord), London Baroque Orchestra, c.

Haas R 20594-6

Symphony No. 22 in E flat.

London Baroque Orchestra, c. Haas SW 8122-3*

Symphony No. 94 in G.

Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Beecham LX 1499-1501

Sinfonia Concertante in B flat (violin, cello, oboe, bassoon).

Danish State Radio Symphony Orchestra, c. Busch .. C 4122-4*

Liszt-Busoni: Rhapsodie Espagnole.

Bachauer, New London Orchestra, c. Sherman .. C 7854-5*

Martini: Double Concerto (2 string orchestras, pianoforte, timpani).

Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Kubelik C 7911-3*

Nielsen: Symphony No. 4.

Danish State Radio Symphony Orchestra, c. Grøndahl .. DB 20156-60*

Strauss (R.): Till Eulenspiegel.

Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Karajan LX 8908-9

Tchaikovsky: Violin Concerto in D.

Heifetz, Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Süsskind DB 21228-31*

Wagner: Siegfried Idyll.

Philharmonia Orchestra, c. Cantelli DB 9746-7

Götterdämmerung, Siegfried's Funeral Music.

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Furtwängler DB 6946*

Weber: Overture, Oberon.

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, c. Furtwängler DB 21104

PIANO

Bach-Busoni: Two Chorale Preludes (Peters V: 30, and VII: 45).

Lipatti LX 1427*

Balakirev: Sonata in B flat minor.

Kentner LX 1407-9

Beethoven: Sonatas, op. 26 and 53.

Backhaus AX 428-32*

Sonata, op. 54.

Solomon C 4159

Sonata, op. 57.

Malcuzyński LX 1459-61

Brahms: Sonata in F minor, op. 5.

Fischer DB 21213-5

Liszt: B minor Sonata.

Kentner DX 1760-2

Czárdás Macabre.

Kentner DX 1813*

Schumann: Kinderszenen, op. 15.

Gieseking LX 8913-4*

*Villa-Lobos: Miscellaneous pieces.*Ellen Ballon $\begin{cases} X & 512-4* \\ M & 670-1* \end{cases}$

* Strongly recommended.

MISCELLANEOUS INSTRUMENTAL

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 Liselotte Selbiger (harpsichord) LX 8915-6*
Gigue and Allemande from Sonata No. 4 in D minor.
 Gioconda de Vito (violin) DB 21300*
Dvořák: Serenade in D minor, op. 44.
 London Baroque Ensemble, c. Haas R 20604-6*
Mozart: Serenade in E flat (K.375).
 London Baroque Ensemble, c. Haas R 20610-2*
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 Irmgard Lechner (harpsichord) C 4167*

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- Schubert: Die schöne Müllerin.*
 Fischer-Dieskau and Moore DB 21388-95

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Fugue in G minor ("The Great").
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 Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra, c. Münchinger LXT 2668
Brahms: Symphony No. 3 in F.
 Concertgebouw Orchestra, c. Szell LXT 2676
Hartmann: Symphony No. 4 for strings.
 Brussels Radio Symphony Orchestra, c. André LGM 65001*
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 Curzon, London Symphony Orchestra, c. Sargent LX 3066

G. N. S.

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* Strongly recommended.

Correspondence

Oakfield School,
West Dulwich, S.E.21.
17th March, 1952.

To the Editor of THE MUSIC REVIEW.

AN ANALOGY OF MUSIC AND EXPERIENCE

SIR,—I am much puzzled by one passage from Mr. Victor Bennett's above-titled article (MR. February last). Writing of "the effect upon us of a tune played at different octaves" Mr. Bennett states:

"Played in the middle of a keyboard, a tune impresses us with its natural significance. It meets us at our own level. But the same tune played two octaves higher, while preserving its general character, grants to us in addition a feeling of high spirits. . . . On the other hand, if the tune is transferred to the bass, the physical depression of the music brings about a corresponding psychological depression in ourselves. The tune now speaks to us with an intonation of gloom. . . . The middle of the keyboard affords us a sense of sobriety, but our appreciation also comprehends the mood of exhilaration which the higher notes insist upon and the mood of dejection stubbornly asserted by the bass."

Frankly, I don't believe a word of it, but in case I'm missing something, would Mr. Bennett kindly explain what happens in a fugue? Supposing it to be in four parts, with the entries ordered B. T. A. S., do I begin by listening in a condition of "psychological depression", move on to an appreciation of the theme's "natural significance" which is rapidly succeeded by "a feeling of high spirits", and finally find myself screwed up to a "mood of exhilaration", perhaps splitting my sides with immoderate laughter? I am honestly interested to know if this is Mr. Bennett's experience of the fugue. If so, my most earnest sympathies are with him. He must go through hell with Bach (but perhaps heaven too).

Maybe the fugue is a wrong analogy; maybe a strict fugue theme isn't the kind of tune Mr. Bennett has in mind. In that case what about the trio from the scherzo of Beethoven's fifth Symphony? At whatever pitch *that* tune is played it obstinately refuses to sound anything but jocular. Not in the very deepest depths of the bass will it take on "an intonation of gloom".

Yours faithfully,

DONALD MITCHELL.

5, Adams Road,
Cambridge.

2nd April, 1952.

To the Editor of THE MUSIC REVIEW.

SIR,—My attention has been drawn to a statement appearing in your August, 1951, issue in which, referring to my viola Sonata, your reviewer H.K. gives it as information gathered from "what seems to be an authoritative source, that the composer himself dislikes the work".

I should be grateful if you would allow me to put it on record that the allegation is untrue. I am, on the contrary, rather fond of that piece, and I believe it is not entirely undeserving of the good opinion in which I hold it myself.

Yours truly,

ROBERTO GERHARD.

60, Corringham Road,
London, N.W.11.

To the Editor of THE MUSIC REVIEW.

CONSTANT LAMBERT

SIR,—I have been entrusted with the task of writing the life of the late Constant Lambert. May I ask that anyone who has letters, photographs, or other documents which may bear upon his life and work would do me the honour to place them at my disposal? Personal reminiscences would be equally welcome.

Copies of such material would be made at once and the originals returned to their owners.

Yours truly,

HUBERT FOSS.

Oxford Books

SOME RECENT PUBLICATIONS

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by DYNELEY HUSSEY

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This is the third volume to be published in the series which already contains the successful books by Eric Blom and John Horton, entitled respectively *Some Great Composers* and *Some Nineteenth-Century Composers*. The essays here, which are neither pure biography nor pure musical analysis, but a synthesis of the two, deal with Monteverdi, Gluck, Weber, Rossini, Donizetti, Bellini, Gounod, Bizet, Mussorgsky, and Puccini.

*Send for the catalogue "Oxford Books on Music,"
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Siegfried Idyll
Karl Münchinger conducting
The Stuttgart Chamber
Orchestra and members of
L'Orchestre de la Suisse
Romande LXT 2669

Rawsthorne
Concerto No. 2
for piano and orchestra
Clifford Curzon (Piano)
with The London Symphony
Orchestra
cond. Sir Malcolm Sargent
LX 3066

Brahms
Symphony No. 1
in C minor, Op. 68
Edvard van Beinum
conducting The Concert-
gebouw Orchestra
of Amsterdam LXT 2675

Brahms
Symphony No. 3 in F major,
Op. 90
George Szell conducting
The Concertgebouw
Orchestra of Amsterdam
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